HIGHWAYS OF HISTORY

History of
Religion in England

The History of Religion in England

HIGHWAYS OF HISTORY

HIGHWAYS OF HISTORY

Edited by

LOUISE CREIGHTON,

AUTHOR OF "A FIRST HISTORY OF ENGLAND,"
"STORIES FROM ENGLISH HISTORY," ETC.

Small 8vo.

THE aim of this series is to give consecutive treatment to certain important subjects in English History. A strictly chronological arrangement of history distracts the reader's attention from one subject to another. Though England's progress has to be studied by reading her history as a whole, yet clearness is gained on many points by a separate survey of some important line of advance. The treatment of the subjects in this series will be adapted for the use of students who have already mastered the general outline of English History, but wish for more connected information with regard to some special point. Each part will be complete in itself, and will treat of its own subject without reference, except where necessary, to the general course of events.

THE GOVERNMENT OF ENGLAND. *1s. 6d.*
THE SOCIAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND.
THE HISTORY OF RELIGION IN ENGLAND. *1s. 6d.*
THE CONNECTION BETWEEN ENGLAND AND SCOTLAND.
ENGLAND AND IRELAND. *1s. 6d.*
THE GROWTH OF THE ENGLISH COLONIES. *1s. 6d.*
THE RELATIONS OF ENGLAND WITH FOREIGN POWERS.

HIGHWAYS OF HISTORY

THE HISTORY

OF

RELIGION IN ENGLAND

BY

HENRY OFFLEY WAKEMAN, M.A.,
FELLOW OF ALL SOULS COLLEGE
BURSAR AND TUTOR OF KEBLE COLLEGE, OXFORD

RIVINGTONS
WATERLOO PLACE, LONDON
MDCCCLXXXV

themselves, or closely connected with foreigners. It is true that we hear of British martyrs, such as S. Alban (304); of British heretics, such as Pelagius (415); of British saints, such as S. Ninian (401) and S. Patrick (440); of British monasteries and schools of learning; of British churches at Glastonbury and Canterbury. But, in spite of all this, it seems probable from the scanty remains which have come down to us, that the Church in Britain was less strong and less rich than the rival heathenism around it.

Naturally therefore, after the departure of the Romans (410), the foreign plant which they had brought with them shrunk and withered before the storm of the English invasion (449). The English were heathens. Their invasion was the migration of a people, not the conquest of an army. The British Christians retired before the advancing tide into the hills of Wales, Strathclyde, and Cornwall, and by the middle of the sixth century (577), all the richer and more populous parts of the country had fallen into the hands of a people who had never been brought into contact with Roman Christianity or civilization, and who hated the Christian faith, because they did not really understand it.

The Mission of S. Augustine, 597.—The Church had to begin the work of conversion afresh, and the task was all the more difficult, because Christianity was chiefly known to the English as the badge of the conquered Celt. It had to be presented to them as a religion superior to their own in tenderness, in persuasiveness, in its power over the life and intellect of man, before they would accept it. This was the *special* work of S. Augustine and his followers.

CHAPTER I.

THE CONVERSION OF THE ENGLISH. 596-690.

The Religion of England.—Ever since the English
were a nation, their religion has been· that of the
Catholic Church of Christ. From the time that the
Angles, Saxons, and Jutes became Christians to the
Reformation, from the sixth to the sixteenth century,
all religious people in England were members of
the Church. Since the Reformation other religious
bodies have sprung into existence, some of them
differing slightly, some very materially, from the
Church; have attracted to themselves numbers of
earnest and devout people; and have exercised a cor-
responding influence, from time to time, upon the
government and policy of England. Still the majority
of Englishmen have always remained members of the
Church, and consequently the History of Religion in
England is mainly the History of the Church of
England.

The British Church.—The Church was first planted
in these islands when Britain was a Roman province,
but it never seems to have really obtained any great
hold over the people. The Christians were mostly
found among the Roman settlers, or the Romanized
Celts—in fact, among those who were either foreigners

B

themselves, or closely connected with foreigners. It is true that we hear of British martyrs, such as S. Alban (304); of British heretics, such as Pelagius (415); of British saints, such as S. Ninian (401) and S. Patrick (440); of British monasteries and schools of learning; of British churches at Glastonbury and Canterbury. But, in spite of all this, it seems probable from the scanty remains which have come down to us, that the Church in Britain was less strong and less rich than the rival heathenism around it.

Naturally therefore, after the departure of the Romans (410), the foreign plant which they had brought with them shrunk and withered before the storm of the English invasion (449). The English were heathens. Their invasion was the migration of a people, not the conquest of an army. The British Christians retired before the advancing tide into the hills of Wales, Strathclyde, and Cornwall, and by the middle of the sixth century (577), all the richer and more populous parts of the country had fallen into the hands of a people who had never been brought into contact with Roman Christianity or civilization, and who hated the Christian faith, because they did not really understand it.

The Mission of S. Augustine, 597.—The Church had to begin the work of conversion afresh, and the task was all the more difficult, because Christianity was chiefly known to the English as the badge of the conquered Celt. It had to be presented to them as a religion superior to their own in tenderness, in persuasiveness, in its power over the life and intellect of man, before they would accept it. This was the ecial work of S. Augustine and his followers.

Gregory the Great had himself wished to undertake a mission to England, and when prevented from doing so by his election to the Papal Chair (590), he chose the provost of his own monastery to be his substitute.

Augustine was a man of commanding presence, deep devotion, and austerity of life; and when he landed on the shores of Kent, Æthelbert, the king of that country, whose queen Bertha was a Christian, received him as a man who had a right to be heard,— the bearer of a message to which it would be folly not to listen. It was in April, 597, that S. Augustine made his entry into Canterbury, and held his first interview with Æthelbert. His success was at first rapid beyond expectation. On Whitsun Day, June 1st, the King himself was baptized. By Christmas more than 10,000 of his people had followed his example. Augustine in the same year received Episcopal Orders at the hands of Vigilius, Archbishop of Arles, and in the year following was made Metropolitan by Gregory, whose ardent mind had already mapped out England and Scotland into the two provinces of Canterbury and York, each of which was to be furnished with twelve suffragan Bishops. This arrangement was never carried out, but before his death S. Augustine was enabled to see an extension of the Church under his guidance, by the foundation of the Sees of London (601) and Rochester (604).

Relations with the Celts.—In his dealings with the Church in Wales S. Augustine was not so successful. There were several differences in ritual and observance between the Roman Church and the Welsh, the most important of which was, that the Welsh in common with all Celtic Christians had a different

mode of keeping Easter from that adopted by the Latin Church. They allowed the festival to take place on the 14th of March, while the earliest day according to the rule of the Latin Church was the 15th. Thus it was possible that the Welsh might be celebrating Easter on the 14th, while the English celebrated it on the 21st. To discuss these differences, and try and prevent an arrangement so plainly inconvenient, two synods were held in 602 at a place on the river Severn known as Augustine's Oak. Owing however partly to the jealousy of the Welsh, and partly to the overbearing conduct of Augustine, the meeting only increased the ill feeling already existing. The Welsh would not acknowledge the primacy of Canterbury, Augustine would not recognise them as members of the Church on any other terms, and so all hope of union had for the time to be deferred.

The Conversion of Northumbria, 627.—To the direct influence of the mission of S. Augustine is due, not only the conversion of Kent, but the more important accession of Northumbria to the Christian faith. Political superiority among the English shifted on the death of Æthelbert to Northumbria. Edwin, the king of that country, had married Æthelburga the daughter of Æthelbert of Kent. With her came to Northumbria as a missionary Bishop, Paulinus, one of S. Augustine's companions on his first voyage to England. Paulinus had the quality, so precious in a missionary, of knowing how to wait. Quietly he allowed the sense of responsibility, which the possession of political power so often gives, to sink deep into Edwin's mind, and teach him by experience the in-*suffici*ency of heathenism as a moral and political force,

compared with the Christianity he saw daily exhibited
in the lives of his wife and Paulinus. The triumph
when it came was complete. "The life of man,"
said a Northumbrian thegn at a meeting summoned
by Edwin to discuss the question of religion, "is like
"a sparrow's flight, which flies in at one door, takes
"shelter for a moment, and flies out again by another
"door, and is lost in the stormy darkness. What has
"gone before it, and what will come after it, we know
"not. If the strange teacher can tell us, by all means
"let him be heard." Coifi, the priest of Woden, was
the first to destroy the shrines at which he had so long
worshipped. Edwin was himself baptized, and as in
Kent, the conversion of the king was followed by that
of large numbers of the people. York was chosen to
be the cathedral city; but from thence as a centre,
Paulinus and his faithful assistant, James the Deacon,
made frequent missionary journeys,—not only through
the forests of Northumbria, but as far south as Lincoln
and the Trent,—until at Edwin's death, in 633, the
larger part of northern England had heard the gospel
of Christ.

Career of Penda of Mercia, 633–655.—The sted-
fastness of the new converts was speedily put to the
proof. Mercia, the great middle kingdom of the
Angles, which stretched from the Humber to the
Thames, played the part of champion to the failing
cause of heathenism. Northumbria to the north-east
had just become Christian (627). To the west and
north-west lay the Christian kingdoms of Wales and
Strathclyde. To the east, East Anglia had become
converted to the faith through the efforts of Felix,
a missionary from the opposite coast of Burgundy

(632); while to the south, Birinus, who had been sent on an independent mission by Pope Honorius, was beginning to preach in Wessex (635). Penda king of Mercia, thus found himself in danger of being hemmed in on all sides by Christian states. He saw that the old religion could only preserve its supremacy by an effort made while as yet the Church was weak and without organization. When once the Church by her own unity had taught Christian states to unite in defence of their common interests, the day of heathenism, and the power of the midland kingdom of Mercia, would be gone. For twenty years Penda was the terror of the Christian name. "He persecuted them that believed in Christ "wherever he found them," we are told. Five kings fell before his resistless arm, among whom was Edwin of Northumbria, killed at the battle of Hatfield, in 633. So complete was the defeat, that the Church in Northumbria was for the time overthrown, and Paulinus, losing heart, went back to Kent. But man's necessity is God's opportunity; and the desertion of his flock by Paulinus in the hour of their peril, led to a greater and more successful effort of missionary zeal than any which had been accomplished by S. Augustine and his followers.

The Scoto-Irish Mission, 635–664.—S. Oswald, the ideal of Christian royalty, as he has been called, on coming to the throne of Northumbria in 634, and seeking to restore the fallen Church, applied, not to Kent, but to the Celtic Church in the north—the child of the great Irish missionary S. Columba—in its island-home of Iona. S. Aidan was sent in answer to *his* request, and settling in the Holy Island of Lindis-

farne (635), brought with him into England a new view of the duties of a missionary Bishop, and one which at the time gave him and his successors a more powerful influence over men than the courtly and accomplished missionaries from Rome had ever attained.

Simplicity and homeliness of life, winning gentleness, austere self-denial, intense devotion, and unsparing zeal, were the characteristics of the Scottish missionaries. They prized retirement, they cultivated above all things personal saintliness. Nothing could be more different than the methods of work employed by the Roman and the Scottish missionary. One was the frequenter of courts and the companion of kings; the other a recluse to whom kings came. The one was intellectual, a man of affairs, a diplomatist; the other, simple, homely, and guileless. The one built fine churches, and sought as far as possible to impress art into the service of religion; the other worshipped in caves, and forests, and rude huts, with a ceremonial simple even to meanness. But the work of the Scots was more thorough and more lasting. Wherever they went they planted convents of men and women, which became the centres of missionary work, as well as of religious life; and each monastery thus founded was a nucleus of organization. In this way, under S. Aidan (635), S. Finan (650), and S. Cuthbert (685) in Northumbria, S. Chad (669) in Mercia, and Cedd (654) among the East Saxons, effectual means were taken, not only to extend the Church over England, but to make her teaching continuous and effective.

The Organization of the Church, 668–690.—By the middle of the seventh century the conversion of

England was complete; but the harder problem of the organization of the infant Church, of the best way to apply the machinery of the Church to the wants of the people, was as yet almost untouched. England owed her faith mainly to two distinct sources—the Roman mission of S. Augustine S. Felix and S. Birinus; and the Scottish mission of S. Aidan and S. Chad. There were differences of character, of observance, and of method between these two movements; and it required the hand of a statesman of no ordinary power to unite firmly together what was best in both, and decide what type of Christianity the English Church was to adopt.

Policy of Theodore, 668.—Such a man was found in Theodore, a Greek monk of Tarsus, who was selected by Pope Vitalian at the request of Oswy of Northumbria to be Archbishop of Canterbury, and consecrated at Rome in the year 668. Theodore was a man of masterful will, great self-reliance, and strong practical ability. His special work was to bind the different dioceses of England together in a real unity in dependence upon the See of Canterbury. Thus he secured that while free scope might be left in monastic institutions and missionary work for Scottish self-denial and simple piety, the direction and government of the Church should remain with Roman culture and statesmanship. He held a synod at Hertford (673), where under his presidency the English Bishops solemnly agreed to keep the Latin rule as to the observance of Easter. In this they were but following the example of the Northumbrian Church, which, at the synod of Whitby in 664, had under the *wise guidance* of Oswy, given up the old Celtic

custom in deference to Roman authority pressed upon them by the celebrated Wilfrid. Having thus established his pre-eminence over the Church, Theodore proceeded to found a school at Canterbury, in order to provide a due succession of learned and devoted men for the priesthood ; and endeavoured to bring the influence of the Church to bear more directly upon the people by subdividing the huge dioceses, which up to this time had been generally co-terminous with the more important kingdoms. In carrying out this subdivision (679), he followed as far as possible the territorial limits of the tribes which had combined to form the kingdoms.

Theodore and Wilfrid, 678–686.—This policy brought Theodore into conflict with the greatest and most interesting of all the early English Bishops, Wilfrid of York. Taking apparently for granted Wilfrid's opposition to any scheme of division, Theodore allowed himself to forget the first principles of ecclesiastical order and common justice. He joined with Egfrid king of Northumbria, Wilfrid's acknowledged enemy, in dividing his diocese without asking his consent (678). Wilfrid appealed to Rome, and obtained a decision from the Pope and a synod of Roman Bishops in his favour (680) ; but was astonished to find that neither Theodore nor Egfrid paid any attention to it whatever. Both the combatants were men of determination. If Theodore had been in the wrong at first, Wilfrid had put himself in the wrong by his appeal to Rome. It was Wilfrid that had to bend to the storm. Many were the vicissitudes through which he passed. At one time we find him the prisoner of Egfrid ; at another a missionary to the Frisians (680) ; at another converting

the South Saxons, and ruling his converts as first Bishop of Selsey (681); at another successively Bishop of Leicester and of Hexham. We hardly know whether to admire most the unflinching determination with which he asserted his own rights and the authority of the Roman See, or the splendid unselfishness with which he gave himself up to the roughest missionary work among the Frisians and South Saxons, or the infinite tenderness of his dealings with his own people at York and at Ripon. Wilfrid is one of the most attractive characters of a most attractive age. In his contest with Theodore, it is Wilfrid that wins our sympathy, though we feel that in the policy of Theodore lay the best hope for the infant Church.

Character of early English Christianity, 690.—The primacy of Theodore marks the period at which the corporate life of the Church in England in connection with the State may be said to have begun. No longer a mere collection of mission stations, monastic in arrangement and independent in government, the Church now presented the appearance of a united society, organized under a definite head, independent of local political divisions, yet closely connected with the different governments of the nations among which she was planted. It was the Church that first taught the English the advantages of unity, that helped them to take the first steps in civilization. The monastic communities pointed out, not only the duty of self-restraint, but the necessity of orderly government, and enforced that lesson all the more strongly by their own frequent failures in discipline. In culture and in piety the Church of England feared *no rival* in the eighth century. Many of the greater

monasteries, such as Whitby and Jarrow, became
schools both of learning and of art. Stone churches
.were built, Church music studied, painting, metal
.work, and needle work were practised. Nor was
the deeper spirit of religion wanting. Bede loves to
dwell upon disregard of self as the prevailing charac-
teristic of early English Christianity. It certainly
shone forth pre-eminent in the lives of S. Aidan, S.
Chad, and S. Cuthbert. Others were ready to follow
in their footsteps. Wilfrid, the missionary to the
Frisians; Willibrord, their first Archbishop (694);
Boniface, the apostle of Germany (718); Benedict
Biscop, the scholar and the artist; Cædmon, the poet;
Bede, the historian (735)—all represent an activity and
devotion to the cause of the Church which could only
spring from vivid and solid religious life. The
English were a homely, rude, possibly gross, people.
It required all the power of a Church, organized,
cultured, and instinct with religious life, to shape
those rough masses into orderly and disciplined
Christianity.

CHAPTER II.

THE OLD ENGLISH CHURCH. 690–1042.

Deterioration of the Monasteries, 690–946.—At the death of Archbishop Theodore in 690, the organization of the Church was in form complete. Under him dioceses had been increased in number, parishes in many districts formed, and provision had been made for holding a synod of the whole English Episcopate annually. The Church had thus been saved from the danger of becoming merely a collection of monasteries, yet the monasteries were still the most important part of her machinery. Their independence, and the want of any recognized rule equally binding upon all, were serious dangers. Each monastery did what was right in its own eyes, and the strictness of life in each varied according to the disposition of its head. The conversion of England had been in no slight degree the work of the laity and of the kings. Never did a people accept the faith with more complete whole-hearted simplicity than the English, but their very zeal brought with it a danger. Religion became fashionable, and the monasteries in particular became rich and patronized. When the first fervour of conversion had passed away, this bore its natural fruit in the steady and grave *deterioration of the* "religious," as those who took religious vows

were technically called. From the days of Theodore to the days of S. Dunstan (946), the wiser rulers of the Church tried hard to preserve the due balance between the "regular"* and the secular clergy, and to purify the monasteries by promoting education, and imposing a stricter discipline on both regulars and seculars through the decisions of synods and councils. But it was in the school of adversity that the English Church really learnt the wholesome lesson of self-discipline.

The Danish Invasions, 836–1042.—For more than two centuries England was subjected to a series of attacks from a heathen power, which, beginning in casual inroads for purposes of mere plunder, grew eventually into a deliberate and successful political conquest. The Church suffered from the Danes even more than the nation. Political power had at the beginning of the ninth century after many oscillations, finally settled into the hands of the West Saxon kings at the battle of Ellandun, in 825; but the headship of the Church still remained centred at Canterbury, and its strength chiefly distributed over the eastern parts of England, which was the country especially open to the ravages of the Danes. The monasteries being rich suffered most from their fury, and amid the flames of Peterborough, Thorney, Ely, and Crowland (866–870), the English Church

* "Regular" clergy are those who are bound to observe a definite religious rule in addition to their Ordination vows, and comprise all monks and friars and some canons, called canons regular. "Secular" clergy are those who are bound only by their Ordination vows, and comprise the parochial clergy and some canons, called canons secular.

learnt self-denial. The work of reconstruction went on side by side with that of devastation, and the conversion of one after another of the Danish pirates showed plainly with whom the victory would ultimately rest.

Results of the Invasion.—After making every allowance for the loss of material and intellectual wealth by the destruction of churches and monasteries, the interruption of religious life and progress, the partial relapse into barbarism, brought about by the invasions, it is hardly too much to say that on the whole their influence upon the English Church was for good. They put an end at once to the fashion for luxurious religion. They brought together Church and King as nothing else could have done. They stirred up again the waning embers of the missionary's zeal and the martyr's devotion. They taught the value of corporate action and of unity. In the kings of this period the Church found nursing fathers of singular wisdom and piety. To Alfred (871–901) was due the revival of learning, and the foundation of schools for the training of an educated clergy. Under Edward the Elder and Æthelstan (901–940) was completed the necessary subdivision of the West Saxon dioceses. All the more vigorous of the sovereigns of England at this time, such as Alfred, Æthelstan, and Edgar, issued codes of ecclesiastical laws, and gave liberally to the support of the Church.

There is, however, another side to this picture, which we must not forget. If the Church became more closely united to the King, she also became more worldly. Archbishops and Bishops were statesmen and warriors. A tendency was springing up for rich *benefices to* become hereditary. Northumbria had been

so cut off from southern England by the Danes, that the province of York was almost independent. To remedy these defects was the great object of S. Dunstan.

Policy of S. Dunstan, 946–988.—He set before himself four distinct objects: (1) To consolidate the nation by extending the power of Edgar over Northumbria, and of Canterbury over York; (2) To revive the influence of the monasteries by inducing them to accept the rule of S. Benedict of Nursia, and devote themselves specially to the work of teaching; (3) To enforce the celibacy of the clergy as the best check upon the growth of hereditary claims; (4) To draw closer the relations between the Church in England and in Europe. In pursuing these aims Dunstan and his followers showed possibly more zeal than discretion, and in particular the substitution of monks for secular canons, as for instance by Æthelwold at Winchester and Oswald at Worcester, created serious rivalry and ill-feeling, and was in itself of very doubtful advantage to the Church. Dunstan's educational scheme, owing to the troubles of the reign of Æthelred the Unready, never got into real working order, though his own monastic school at Glastonbury, and that of Æthelwold at Abingdon, became at one time almost the universities of England. Still, whatever his failures may have been, if we look at the breadth of his views and the thoroughness of his reforms, it is impossible not to recognize in S. Dunstan an ecclesiastical statesman of the first rank.

Internal Polity of the Church.—The old English, like their descendants, valued practical advantage much more than accurate logic, and in nothing does this

characteristic come out more prominently than in the constitution of the Church. She was closely connected with the State. She had to deal with kings, for the most part earnest and wise supporters of her interests. She possessed in her own prelates the advisers, often the directors, of the national policy. There was therefore no need to be scrupulous as to the formal expression of differences between ecclesiastical and civil authority, which no one thought of disputing. It is frequently difficult to apportion accurately the extent of power each claimed or exercised; yet it seems clear, that though the amount of independence enjoyed by the Church at any one time depended very materially upon the character of the King and the condition of the nation, the Kings never knowingly put forward any claim, either to make laws for the Church, or to explain laws dealing with spiritual matters, on their own authority merely. The close connection between Church and State far more truly implied the subjection of the latter than of the former. For many years it was only as members of the Church that Northumbrians and West Saxons could feel themselves to be Englishmen. To the prelates and learned men of the Church kings looked for guidance in making their laws, and authority in enforcing them.

The Bishop sat in the royal courts of justice as well as the Ealdorman—the representative of the Church, as well as the representative of the State. Among the witan, the law makers, the Bishops took a leading part. In their own ecclesiastical synods they sought for the assent and confirmation of the witan to the canons they had enacted. All this threw great power into the hands of the Bishops, and brought great riches to

the Church. Both became a source of weakness. Bishops, who were statesmen rather than ecclesiastics, did not scruple to pay themselves for their secular employments, by absorbing the revenues of two or three sees, and doing the work of none. Riches, which came from the liberality, and not seldom from the caprice, of benefactors, were from the earliest times most unequally distributed. The old rule of the Church had always been, that a tenth of a man's property ought to be given to the service of God, and this no doubt had become the usual custom among the English converts. In the eighth century it was made an ecclesiastical law. After the death of Alfred it is included in the royal codes. This tithe, with minor customary offerings such as Church scot and soul scot, formed the chief source of revenue for the parochial clergy, and was usually paid direct to the Bishop and distributed by him among them. But not unfrequently, by interest or arrangement, influential laymen would obtain the privilege of paying all their tithe to some favourite monastery or parish. Gifts of land to particular parishes and monasteries became common, and so grew up an inequality of revenue among both the "regular" and the parish clergy, which had the double disadvantage of increasing the temptations of the patrons and the servility of the patronized.

Learning and Culture.—In times so disturbed we can hardly expect to find much culture or originality of thought. Yet there are distinct traces from time to time in the old English Church, of powers of mind which seemed only to want the incentive of a freer intellectual life around, to found a school of learning which might bear comparison with any on the Conti-

nent. The end of the seventh century was one such epoch, distinguished as it was by the poet Cædmon (664), Benedict Biscop, the artist (689); and Aldhem (705), the grammarian and theologian. Another such epoch is that of the ninth century, when there gathered round Alfred, himself no mean representative of intellectual Christianity, Archbishop Plegmund, the scholar; Grimwald, the teacher; and Asser, the historian. Cædmon is the father of English poetry; Alfred, of English prose; but in philosophy and in the deeper things of theology, the old English Church has no representative. The one all-accomplished man of the time, Alcuin, left England for the friendship of the Emperor Karl. Much of the best literary work even of Alfred's time was not original. It required that Norman brilliancy should be infused into English stolidity, before the dormant powers of thought could be stirred into active life.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHURCH UNDER THE NORMAN KINGS.
1042-1189.

The Church on the Eve of the Conquest, 1042-1066. The religious revival of which S. Dunstan is the foremost exponent was short-lived. The eleventh century is marked by a steadily increasing interest in ecclesiastical affairs, and a steadily decreasing vitality in religion. Cnut visited Rome and founded a hospital there for the English in 1027. Pilgrimages to the Holy Land became frequent. Leofric of Mercia built and endowed monasteries in the midland counties, of which Coventry and Wenlock are the best known. Ælfric, Archbishop of York, was celebrated for his learning. Edward the Confessor earned the glory of being the last saint who has hallowed the English throne, yet even his saintliness is not unmixed with poverty of character. His court had become so indifferent to religion, that it is mentioned as a mark of his great devotion, that he did not talk during the celebration of Mass. Aldred, the best of his Bishops, was the worst of pluralists. Simony, the invariable sign of a decaying morality, was rife and went unpunished. Ecclesiastical councils ceased to meet. Edward, half Norman in blood and wholly Norman in sympathy, tried to check the growing decay by a large

infusion of Norman clergy. He appointed a Norman, named Robert of Jumièges, to be Archbishop of Canterbury (1051). Never did experiment fail so signally. Stubborn English prejudice rose quick and hot against the foreigner. Refined Norman culture misunderstood and despised the dull Englishman. The Norman clergy, feeling their position insecure, looked upon the English Church as their legitimate prey, and fastened on it like vultures on a carcase. Things were ripe for a great change and the Norman Conquest came none too soon.

The Norman Conquest, 1066.—William the Conqueror was no leader of a revolution in Church any more than in State, but the change which dated from his accession could not fail to be a revolution. English Bishops and Abbots were replaced by Normans, and the Norman clergy thus coming into the country, not merely to hold lucrative posts, as in the days of Edward, but to occupy it and make it their own, brought the English Church at once into direct relations with the Papacy and all Latin Christianity. They taught her to be in sympathy with the religious movements of the world, to bring her own government under the rule of law, and to use the newly-forged weapon of the Canon Law for the assertion and defence of her privileges. Never was change more momentous. The English Church had been isolated, lethargic, and rude. She had exercised no influence over Europe. She had lost her influence over her own sons. She had been singularly unproductive of great men. In less than a century after the Conquest her reputation stood higher even than that of Rome. Her Primate (Anselm) was hailed by the Pope himself as "the Pope of *another* world." She had thrown herself into the

Crusades with an energy which was characteristic of her every action. She had emerged successful from a struggle with the King. She had covered the soil of England with buildings of the rarest beauty. She had compiled for herself in the "use of Sarum" a cere- monial said to be the most perfect in the world. She had revived her discipline, and enforced the celibacy of her clergy. In Lanfranc, Anselm, and Thomas à Becket she had won the allegiance of the most cele- brated ecclesiastics of the day.

England and the Papacy.—A close alliance had always existed between the Normans and the Papacy, and this soon brought about difficulties in England. The isolation of the English Church before the Con- quest had been shewn in nothing so much as the jealousy with which all attempts on the part of the Popes to exercise authority over her had been regarded. English- men had professed and had felt a great reverence for the Roman Church as their mother. Pilgrimages to the threshold of the Apostles were common. The pre-eminence of the Pope, as the successor of S. Peter, was willingly recognised; but no exercise of direct control was permitted. No right of appeal to Rome in ecclesiastical cases was acknowledged, though occa- sionally the Pope would be asked to decide a case as arbiter. In the case of Wilfred the Pope's decision was quietly ignored, and S. Dunstan himself openly refused to obey a Papal sentence. Such independence would never have entered into the minds of the Norman clergy. They lived at a time when, under the deter- mined leadership of Hildebrand, Papal claims in their extreme form were being extended over the secular as well as over the religious world. The supremacy of

the Pope, which carried with it a right to interfere with
the Church in every nation as he pleased, was never
doubted. It was only when the Papal power seemed to
encroach upon that of the King that questions could
arise. The independent rights of the Church were not
much considered, but all men could appreciate the im-
portance of a personal rivalry between Pope and King.

Policy of William I.—William I. was not the man
to let power slip from his hands through inadvertence.
He was determined to have no rival authority to his
own in his kingdom. Ruling as legitimate English
King, he fully felt the strength which the indepen-
dent position of the English Church gave him in
his dealings with the Papacy. When Hildebrand—
now seated on the Papal throne as Gregory VII.
(1076)—demanded homage, William replied that he
could not do what his predecessors had never done ;
and declared it to be the custom of the English
Church that no letter of the Popes should be admitted,
no synod held, no Pope acknowledged, no baron excom-
municated without the King's leave was first obtained.
But he had no desire to play the tyrant over the
national Church. His own personal religion was deep
and sincere. In nothing does he shine out in better
contrast to his successors than in his ecclesiastical
appointments. In Lanfranc—Abbot of the famous
monastery of Bec in Normandy, whom he appointed
Archbishop of Canterbury in 1070—he found a
minister after his own heart. Never perhaps in the
history of the Church, have her interests been en-
trusted to two men of such ability and strength of
character who have worked with each other so loyally
and so well. Supreme over the Church William was

determined to be, but that supremacy was to be used for her benefit. "He was mild," say the Chroniclers, "to the good men who loved God, but beyond measure stark to those who opposed his will." In him was to lie the initiative in legislation, the ultimate power in administration; but in the exercise of both the responsible officers of the Church were to be consulted, and their advice taken. To increase the efficiency of Church discipline he did not scruple to separate the ecclesiastical from the royal courts, and place the former under the rule of the canon law, though by doing so he weakened the royal authority, and gave opportunity for a protracted struggle between Church and State.

Struggle between Church and Crown, 1093–1170.— Arrangements such as these depended entirely for their success upon the desire of the King to act for the welfare of the Church, and the willingness of the Primate to co-operate as far as he possibly could with the King. In William Rufus (1087) England had a King, rapacious, tyrannical, and scornfully irreligious, who looked upon the Church as his property, and thought only how he could make the most out of it. In Anselm (1093), an Archbishop who, saintly gentle and lovable, was yet too much of a monk to understand the rough ways of the world, or to play the statesman amid the horrors of the Red King's court. A struggle consequently broke out between Church and State, which has lasted more or less from that day to this, and which perhaps in the very nature of things, will always exist whenever Churchmen care for the spiritual independence of the Church, and politicians for the practical supremacy of the State.

In the times of the Norman kings men felt vaguely but instinctively, that whatever the technical rights and wrongs of the particular question between the King and the Archbishop might be, the cause of Anselm in his contest with William Rufus, and of Becket in his contest with Henry II., was really the cause of Christianity against brute force. The questions at issue between the two powers were simple. Was Anselm, as Archbishop, to be allowed to acknowledge Urban to be the rightful Pope without William's leave? (1097.) Should he swear fealty to Henry I. and receive the episcopal ring and crozier from his hands after the Council of the Lateran had forbidden him to do so? (1103.) Was Becket to preserve for his clergy, when they committed crime, the privilege of being amenable only to their own courts? (1163.) To questions such as these it did not much matter what answer was given; but all men who loved their country and their faith felt it to be the matter of the very gravest importance whether the Kings who were paramount in the State should also be paramount in the Church. Next to the capricious tyranny of a feudal baronage, the organized tyranny of the King was the greatest danger to society and to religion. When so much depended upon the personal character of the sovereign, men hesitated in giving over what they most prized unreservedly into his hands. The Normans were a race of strange contrasts. They produced the highest types of intellectual sanctity, and of rigorous self-denial, side by side with the lowest and most depraved and cynically brutal of mankind. A nation of angels, it has been said, and a nation of devils. The Church was the one champion of morality, of purity, and of

faith, able to cope with such a state of things. She
alone was capable of teaching men to refuse the evil
and choose the good. They looked to the Church as
the guardian and safeguard of right. They were not
prepared to surrender their morality into the hands of
a king like Rufus, or a minister like Ranulf Flambard
(1094), the first of that infamous race of clerical attor-
neys, who prostituted their talents to effect the ruin
and spoliation of the Church whose Orders they bore.
Men turned to the Papacy as the power bound to
help them in their necessity, and most able to do so
effectually. They did not see the danger which after-
ages were so soon to know, of a Papal tyranny worse
than a royal tyranny, because less easily combated.
So it came about that Anselm and Becket, leaning as
they did upon the Papal arm, and appealing to Papal
law, were yet felt to be the champions of the national
Church, and were recognised as the leaders and the
friends of the people. The Constitutions of Clarendon,
passed in 1164, and accepted by Becket, seemed to
decide the contest in favour of the King; but the exile
and subsequent martyrdom of the Archbishop in 1170,
in reality gained a substantial, though incomplete,
victory for the Church, and raised one of the most
Papal of English archbishops, and most wrong-headed
of men, to the position of a national hero, and the
greatest of national saints.

Condition of the Higher Clergy.—In the interior
life of the Church the changes produced by the Con-
quest were no less marked. Celibacy was enforced
upon the clergy as quickly as so great a social change
could be effected. An end was put to the slave trade
with Ireland, so long the disgrace of England. In

1075 Episcopal sees were removed from small villages to the larger centres of population, and Lincoln, Salisbury, and Chichester became Cathedral cities, instead of Dorchester, Sherborne, and Selsey. In many of the Cathedrals the canons were replaced by monks, and the chapters becoming monastic, gained the privilege of being freed from Episcopal control, and Bishops were thus ousted from their own Cathedral Churches. The Norman Bishops and Abbots took a much greater part in the affairs of the world than their English predecessors had done. They were more busy and more worldly-wise. By degrees there grew up under the Norman kings a race of secular ecclesiastics, of whom Roger of Salisbury (1107) and Hubert Walter (1193) are the best representatives; men not like Dunstan or Stigand, ecclesiastics who were also statesmen, but men who were really politicians and administrators, paid for their political services out of Church revenues. Bishoprics not unfrequently fell to men of this stamp, and the cause of religion suffered much from the fact that those in high places in the Church were not primarily devoted to her service.

Growth of Monasticism.—One result of the worldliness of the Episcopate was a great development of monasticism. Religion, banished from the palace, took refuge in the cell. There was much in monasticism to appeal to the more earnest minds of the day. The age was rough, often brutal and oppressive, but active, vigorous, full of life and thought. The monastery offered absolute equality to a society growing daily more feudal and aristocratic. It offered a refuge to the quiet and peaceable, leisure to the studious, protection to the weak. The splendour of its buildings, the

beauty of its ceremonial, appealed to the artistic sense
of the Norman, its strict routine to his love of order.
Its constant round of worship, its disciplined life, had
infinite attractions for the devout and the thoughtful.
So it came about that what was best and most real
in religion tended more and more to take refuge in the
monasteries. From monasteries came Lanfranc, Anselm,
and S. Hugh, who was made Bishop of Lincoln by
Henry II. in 1086. New orders of monks appeared in
quick succession: the Cluniacs, in 1077; the Cister-
cians, in 1128; the Carthusians, in 1180—all following
the rule of S. Benedict, and each in turn adopting
a more severe form of that rule. All of them found
a welcome in England. The religious from fashion
and the irreligious from self-interest endowed and
enriched the monks. Gradually the whole face of the
country—from the rich plains of Kent and Sussex, to
the wild valleys of Wales and Yorkshire—was covered
with monasteries. They became the schools, the hospi-
tals, the almshouses of mediæval society. They acquired
lands, and absorbed the patronage and revenues of parish
churches, until at last their increasing riches became
a temptation to themselves and a danger to the State.
The history of monasticism is that of the noblest and
most useful institution the world has ever seen, brought
to ruin by its own success.

Church Architecture.—The Norman Conquest made
the Church more stately outwardly, as well as more
learned and more devout inwardly. It enabled
Romanesque architecture to reach its fullest develop-
ment in England. The northern form of this
beautiful style, which can express so justly differ-
ences of climate and of national temperament in

the graceful basilicas of Italy, the comprehensive domes of the East, and the majestic cruciform churches of England, and yet maintain in all the round arch as the distinguishing feature of the building, and the solemnity of repose as its characteristic thought, was brought to perfection in England under the Norman kings. The first great church to be built in the new "French" style was the Abbey of S. Peter at Westminster, founded by Edward the Confessor in 1066. Directly the Conquest was complete, the Norman ecclesiastics began everywhere to replace the rude and primitive churches they found with more ambitious buildings. In the east, Peterborough, Ely, and Southwell, famous for their low arcade and huge triforium gallery; in the west, Gloucester, and Tewkesbury, equally famous for their massive and dignified nave columns and the attenuated triforium, are among the glories of Northern Romanesque. In all is found the round arch as the structural feature of the building, in all the same cruciform shape, which it was the special boast of the Norman builders to have adopted. The style reached its full perfection in the great church of S. Cuthbert at Durham, begun in 1093. Justness of proportion in arcade, triforium, and clerestory. Simplicity of form. Unequalled richness of outline in the deeply-grooved columns of the wonderful nave, here found in sharp but eloquent contrast to its fortress-like exterior, put it on a level with the highest conceptions of Gothic beauty or classical grace. Westminster Abbey may be more lovely, S. Peter's at Rome more vast and grand; but for strength and dignity and solemnity the church of S. Cuthbert need fear no rival.

CHAPTER IV.

RELIGION IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

Position of the Church, 1189–1399.—When the first Plantagenet king ascended the English throne (1154), the Church had assumed the form which she was to bear throughout the Middle Ages. Her organization was complete. She understood clearly her privileges, and the way in which she wished to assert them. She understood also her duties, and had distinctly set herself not so much to leaven society as to absorb it. The Church more than the Crown was the expression of the national feeling and the national unity. Her hierarchy, thoroughly organized in due gradation, formed a strong contrast to the confusion in which the civil constitution was still obscured, and presented to Englishmen a bright example of the power of law and of system. Her mastery over art and her leadership in thought made her beyond danger of rivalry the teacher of mankind. Simplicity of life, forgetfulness of self, and unhesitating obedience to the Divine call, marked those who were acknowledged to be her truest representatives, justified her spiritual claims, and made men willingly acquiesce in the worldly assumptions of a society so evidently Divine.

The Papacy and the Crown.—The supremacy assumed by the Popes of the early Middle Ages, both in spiritual matters because of the alleged supremacy of S. Peter over the other apostles, and in temporal matters because of the inherent superiority of the spiritual over the temporal power, was, as we have seen, exercised at first in the interests of religion. The Church and the people assisted by the Pope, fought hard and successfully against the tyranny of Norman ministers and the brutality of Norman kings. The same is true of the great struggle which marks the reign of John. By forcing the King and the English Church to accept Stephen Langton as Archbishop of Canterbury (1206) by an act of sheer arbitrary will, Innocent III. was unwittingly doing his best to support the cause of constitutional liberty in Church and State against the despotism of Pope and King. It was fitting that in the revolt of the nation (1208–1215) from the rule of a king like John —cruel, profligate, and faithless—the Church should take the lead, headed by an Archbishop who was the personal friend and selected candidate of the greatest of the Popes. At no time in the history of England did the Church come forward more distinctly as the champion of religion and of liberty than when she taught the Barons to wrest the Great Charter from John (1215). But the alliance between the Papacy and liberty was soon seen to be hollow. John, to regain his power over England, had consented to surrender his country to the Pope (1213). From that time the Popes claimed feudal as well as spiritual supremacy over England. A claim so monstrous was subsequently *re*pudiated by Parliament in the reigns of Edward I.

and Edward III. There always was in the English Church a large and influential party strongly opposed to the spiritual as well as the temporal assumptions of the Pope. Nevertheless during the long and feeble reign of Henry III. the Papal supremacy gradually became more and more acquiesced in, if not recognized, and brought evils of a serious character to religion.

Papal Abuses.—The Pope was now found in alliance with the King in opposition to the baronage, the people, and the national party in the Church (1232). Barons and people could help themselves, but the Church was powerless against the administrative tyranny of Pope and King combined. It is significant that Simon de Montfort (1257) was the champion of the Church, while the Papal Legate was the King's chief adviser. The discredit thus brought on the Papacy by its alliance with despotism was increased by the way in which the Popes used the ascendancy they had gained. The rights of patronage, appeal, and taxation were the three strings of the whip with which the Popes lashed the Church during the Middle Ages. By the giving of the pall, without which no metropolitan could exercise jurisdiction, they obtained a real hold over the appointment of the Archbishops. By sending legates, or representatives appointed either for life or for some special purpose, who during the tenure of their office superseded the rights of the metropolitan, they were enabled to keep a check upon the Archbishops when they were appointed.

(1) *Patronage.*—By the system of provisions, the Popes claimed in virtue of their supreme authority to present to benefices in exclusion of the rights of the patron. In the fourteenth century this system was extended to bishoprics, and the Papacy thereby gained

complete command over the most important appoint-
ments in the Church. This privilege the Popes often
used to the great detriment of religion by appointing
either friends of the king or members of the Papal Court,
whom they found it convenient to reward. In this way
many foreigners, ignorant of the English language, and
careless of the interests of religion, became the possessors
of benefices in the English Church, and did much to
promote the national dislike to foreign interference.

(2) *Appeals.*—Before the Conquest the practice of
sending causes to be finally decided in the Papal
Court hardly existed, but under the Norman kings it
became well established, subject only to the necessary
preliminary of obtaining the licence of the king be-
fore the appeal was lodged at Rome. By the time
the Plantagenets came to the throne (1154), it may
be said that the right of appeal to the Pope in the
last resort had become a recognized part of English
ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Henry II. tried to check
the further growth of this practice by the Constitutions
of Clarendon (1164), but after the murder of Becket he
had to withdraw his opposition, and the constitution
that dealt with this point remained a dead letter. In
the thirteenth century the practice reached its height,
and the Popes were enabled by means of their appellate
jurisdiction to graft the principles of the Roman
Canon Law—framed, of course, in the direct interests
of the Papacy—firmly upon English ecclesiastical
law, and thus to raise yearly a very considerable sum by
way of fees for legal procedure and dispensations. As
the administration of law became better in England,
both in the royal and ecclesiastical courts after the time
of Edward I. (1272), and worse at Avignon after the

Popes had taken up their residence there for the period generally known as the Avignonese Captivity (1309–1377), the importance of the right of appeal declined; but up to the beginning of the Reformation it still proved a very lucrative source of income to the Papal Court, especially in questions of marriage law.

(3) *Taxation.*—In the matter of taxation the Popes were even more grasping and met with less resistance. The Kings were not unwilling to hand over the clergy to the tender mercies of the Popes; and the Popes, embroiled as they were in the struggle, first with the emperor, and then with France, and then with each other, were in constant need of money. There was no place from which money could be obtained so easily as from England, and consequently year by year the screw was tightened, and the pressure grew more severe. The exactions which were most felt were the exorbitant fees payable on every step of legal procedure, and the demand for firstfruits, *i.e.* the income of the bishopric or benefice for the first year, which was made for the first time by Alexander IV. in 1256. But besides these the clergy voted from time to time in provincial synod large sums to the Pope, which, though in name voluntary, were in reality compulsory payments. The Pope had an official collector in England to look after his interests and collect these various dues; and it is said that in the reign of Henry III. the sum sent every year to Rome was equal to not less than £130,000 of our money; while a century later, it is stated that in first-fruits alone the Pope was in the habit of receiving annually no less a sum than £40,000. Exactions so gross, levied with so cynical a

disregard to the interests of the people and of religion, did much to create in the nation a body of feeling permanently hostile to the Papacy and to the Church. It found its literary expression in the squibs and satires of the time, which, from the rude doggerel rhymes called forth by the Barons' War, in the time of Henry III. (1258), up to the polished satire of Piers Plowman (1380) and Chaucer (1400), are never weary of chastising the follies and the vices of the clergy and the abuses of the Papal Court.

Anti-papal Legislation.—Through the playfulness of Chaucer may easily be discerned a feeling of deepseated indignation at the system which permitted the evils which he castigates. In politics this is even more marked. Throughout the Middle Ages Parliament was always ready to support the King whenever he ventured to take up the cudgels against the growing power of the clergy or of the Pope. The Statute-book of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries is full of legislation against the clergy. By the statute of Mortmain (1279) Edward I. tried to prevent the Church from acquiring too much land, and so defeating the right of the King to feudal dues. By the statute of Provisors (1351) Edward III. and his Parliament tried to put a stop to the system of Papal provisions by making them illegal. The Act was confirmed and re-enacted by Richard II. in 1390, but the self-interest of Kings and Popes led them to make an agreement together to evade the law, by which the King nominated to a vacancy, and the Pope appointed the King's nominee by provision. This system of collusion gave the King the important nominations about which alone he really cared ; while the Pope maintained his claim to appoint by provision, and

exercised it without hindrance in the case of less important patronage. By the statute of Præmunire (1393) a strong attempt was made to check the administrative power of the Pope in England, by putting out of the protection of the law those who procured authority from the Pope to do anything which might interfere with the prerogative of the King; a statute which was too severe to be really effective, and proved a ready engine of tyranny rather than a protection of liberty.

There was therefore throughout the Middle Ages, from the Constitutions of Clarendon under Henry II., to the statute of Præmunire under Richard II., a series of efforts made by the nation in Parliament to check by legislation the encroachments and exactions of the Papal Court. These efforts however could only result in legal enactment when the King wished that they should do so. The law when made could only be enforced if the King thought it his interest to enforce it. Usually the Kings found it more easy and more profitable to be on good terms with the Pope, and connive at his encroachments as the price of his friendship and assistance. The clergy on their side preferred to submit to misgovernment and rapacity on the part of the Popes, rather than incur danger to their privileges by calling in the power of the State to help them. Matters were at a dead-lock—neither side could move. The worse Church administration became, the more hopeless seemed the chance of reform, and so, choked and fettered by her own pride, and the selfishness of King and Pope, the brilliant high-souled religion of the thirteenth century dwindled and shrunk into the shallow formalism of the fourteenth, and the artistic unreality of the fifteenth.

Convocation.—In the matter of organization, the thirteenth century left its mark upon the Church no less than upon the State. From the very earliest times the clergy of each of the provinces of Canterbury and York had been accustomed to meet together from time to time in provincial synod, to discuss matters of ecclesiastical interests, pass canons binding upon the clergy, and make money grants to the King. This latter function became naturally enough the one in which the government was most interested, and the principle of representation was gradually applied to ecclesiastical councils, just as it was gradually applied to the national council or Parliament. During the reign of Henry III., deans, archdeacons, abbots, some representatives of the cathedral chapters and the parochial clergy (1257), were occasionally summoned to attend the provincial synods. Edward I. developed the principle further, and in his reign (1283) Convocation assumed the shape which it has ever since borne; namely, that of a synod of the Bishops of the Province, assisted by a house of representatives of the cathedral and parochial clergy, whose special function it is to bring grievances to the notice of the Bishops, and suggest the proper method of reforming them. The Convocations are therefore unique kinds of provincial synods, and form the supreme legislative and deliberative councils of the national Church. As the province of York was for so many years quite insignificant, both as regards the numbers of its population and the importance of its Episcopate, the Convocation of Canterbury has always taken the lead, and its decisions have often been treated as the authorita-*tive* voice of the Church of England. In reality its

authority is only that of one among the two provinces into which England is divided, and it is necessary that the two Convocations should agree, in order to pass canons binding upon the whole Church.

Influence over Thought.—It is in her political relations and her adminstration that the mediæval Church is seen at her worst. In real power over the lives, actions, and thought of mankind, there was never a period in her history when the Church was more powerful or more successful. She aspired to guide men into all truth. She took naturally the lead in every department of human life, and in the thirteenth century at least, she fulfilled her mighty task in a way quite unexampled. In politics Innocent III. and his immediate successors stand out clearly as the most powerful statesmen in an age which produced Edward I. In law the Church formulated for herself a system of canonical jurisprudence in no way inferior to the civil law, while it was under her direct influence that the great law-makers of the time—Alphonso of Castile, Louis IX. of France, and Edward I.—began to codify and systematize. In literature it was the Church that inspired Dante, and trained Wiclif. The herald of modern science, Roger Bacon, was a friar. In thought, the Church produced the best philosophy of the day in the teaching of the Schoolmen, a philosophy which, whatever may have been the faults of its method, did not hesitate within the limits it laid down for itself, to probe the deepest problems of religion and of life, and which has foreshadowed, and in part dealt with, the most searching questions of modern thought, in a way which shews, not only the ingenuity of the thinker, but the depth and comprehensiveness of the thought.

Wiclif and the Lollards, 1368–1417.—Nor were attempts at the reformation of flagrant abuses wanting. The Lollard movement, which is so striking a feature in the history of the Church at the end of the fourteenth century, was speculative as well as practical. Wiclif (1370) was a philosopher as well as a reformer, but he owed his real power chiefly to his moral strength. It was the directness of his attack on luxury and corruption ; the simplicity, purity, and enthusiasm of his followers ; his sincere sympathy for the poor and the down-trodden, that gave him so great an influence over Englishmen. He has, however, been remembered chiefly in later times as the leader of the first great act of rebellion against the Pope and the doctrinal definitions of Rome. He failed because the movement became political. His followers, adopting socialistic principles, arrayed against themselves the full powers of Church and State ; but nevertheless they succeeded in implanting firmly in the minds of the lower classes a genuine hatred of Church corruption, and taught them to look upon the riches of the Church as the greatest snare to religion. This led to determined efforts by the Commons in 1404 and 1410 to confiscate Church property for military purposes, and helped to pave the way for the suppression of the priories in England which belonged to foreign monasteries by Archbishop Chichele in 1414, and the more systematic plunder of Henry VIII. and Cromwell a century later.

Art and Architecture.—Art did not exist except as the handmaid of religion. In England the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries gave birth to architecture in its most lovely form, and claimed her as the servant of *the Church* for ever. It is impossible now to dissociate

Gothic architecture and the Christian faith. The age was one which teemed with high and noble thought; and the builders of the time, seeking to find adequate expression for their thought seized eagerly upon the resources offered to them by the pointed arch, and made arch spring upon arch from floor to roof, and even above the roof, in lofty arcade and soaring spire. Unlike the round arch of Romanesque, which clings to earth and expresses the solemnity of repose, the Gothic pointed arch leaps up to heaven in ever-increasing effort after height. Every detail is instinct with life. The foliage of the clustered column capitals, the grotesque on the corbel or the gurgoyle, the carving of reredos or stall, sometimes quaint and coarse, sometimes exquisitely refined and graceful, show how the mediæval artist sought to lay the whole of human life just as it was, without any reservation, under contribution to the service of God. Such is the genius of Gothic architecture. As the years passed this exquisite sense of beauty of form and of colour began to express itself in other arts, mostly decorative. Missals and books of devotion were enriched with paintings, showing delicacy of thought and refinement of execution, which modern times dare not even attempt to imitate. Glass painting, embroidery, brass and ironwork, fresco painting, all in their turn claimed attention; and architects had to alter somewhat the style of their buildings to accommodate the new-comers. Windows became larger and larger till they grew into walls of painted glass. Roofs and arches became more and more flat to allow better space for the frescoes. Carved corbels and capitals disappeared to avoid interfering with the painting, and so by degrees the Gothic church inside

became architecturally a skeleton, which it required the art of the decorator to clothe with flesh and blood and endow with life. Even in the architectural features of the buildings dignity of form had largely given way to beauty of ornament. The transition, of course, was very gradual. Each successive change seemed to produce something in its own way more beautiful than the last. The union of the highest efforts of all arts, structural and decorative, in a church of the fifteenth century gave to the whole a completeness and a rich- ness of effect which had been hitherto unknown ; yet it is impossible not to feel that, as far as architecture itself is concerned, the transition from the Decorated to the Perpendicular is a distinct step backward in artistic and national growth. Compare Westminster Abbey built in the thirteenth century, with Henry VII. chapel built in the last years of the fifteenth, and no one can fail to mark in the latter a decadence of true architectural and artistic spirit.

Influence over Life.—The supremacy of the Church over the religious side of man's nature was no less assured than over the intellectual and artistic. She took the lead in self-sacrifice and in devotion, as she did in statesmanship, in philosophy, and in art. The period we are considering begins with the foundation of the orders of mendicant friars by S. Dominic and S. Francis of Assisi (1216) ; it ends with the writing of the *Imitatio* by Thomas à Kempis. The friars* in

* The friars (so called from the French word *frère*, a brother) were members of religious orders founded by S. Dominic and S. Francis, who were bound by their vows to a life of absolute poverty, possessed no property, and depended upon charity even *for food.*

their earlier years were patterns of Christian ascetic devotion. Fired by the example and enthusiasm of S. Francis, they embraced a life of poverty; they lived amongst the most degraded of men; they tended the most loathsome diseases; they devoted themselves to the sick, the outcast, and the miserable. Nor were the monks far behind. Many of the monasteries, it is true, had become rich, and some luxurious. Their inmates partook rather of the character of decorous landlords than religious enthusiasts. Still the lazar houses and the hospitals they built and manned, the loving care they lavished upon their church and its services when their own buildings often were poor and decayed, show no mean contrast to the piety of later ages. The Middle Ages were essentially times of contrast. There were abuses plentiful in number and destructive of religion; such as Papal and royal misgovernment, non-residence and worldliness of Bishops, the growing influence of clerical lawyers, the expenses of ecclesiastical courts, the concubinage of so many of the clergy, the endless quarrels between regulars and seculars, between monks and friars. Nevertheless, side by side with them, and unharmed by them, was seen the keenest intellect, the purest self-sacrifice, the freest generosity, the simplest devotion, consecrated wholly, unhesitatingly, to the cause of the Church, and identifying her with all that was best, truest, and most lasting in mediæval society.

CHAPTER V.

THE CHURCH ON THE EVE OF THE REFORMATION. 1400–1530.

Characteristics of the Fifteenth Century. — The fifteenth century was an age of decay. Society in the Middle Ages was based upon feudalism. The Church had identified herself with feudalism, had organized herself upon the feudal model, and had appealed to feudal principle for obedience and veneration. So the Church decayed in power as feudalism decayed. There were many causes which assisted to bring this about. Christendom had hitherto been a small collection of small powers, knowing nothing of the new world in the West, and shut off from the great nations of the East, by the barrier which the Eastern Church and Empire still presented to the advancing hosts of Islam. During the fifteenth century the whole state of affairs was altered. The Portuguese and Spaniards began to explore and colonize on the shores of the Atlantic. Columbus pushed boldly across and discovered America (1492). Constantinople and the Eastern Empire fell at last before the victorious Turk (1453), and Christendom found itself confronted by an enemy, fierce, powerful, and infidel, in the very heart of Europe. The supremacy over the Mediterranean was lost—Rome itself was threatened with

destruction. The crisis was one to call forth all the latent powers of the Middle Ages. What cause could stir a society based upon the Church and upon feudalism like that which appealed to all the chivalrous and religious instincts of mankind, and called upon the nations of Christendom to unite under the Pope for the protection of religion against the infidel? The appeal failed ignominiously. Princes would not sacrifice their own political schemes to defend the Papacy, because they did not trust the Popes. The Popes themselves were too deeply interested in their own ambitious designs to devote themselves to the cause of the Church. The Papacy was nothing if it was not a centre of unity. Now that the crisis came and union was imperatively required, it could unite no one. It stood forth before the eyes of men as having failed just where failure was most disastrous and least excusable. Nor was this to be wondered at.

Decay of the Papacy, 1309–1417.—The Papacy no longer commanded the obedience of Europe, because the Popes no longer commanded its respect. In the middle of the fourteenth century they had left Rome and established their court at Avignon, close to the frontiers of France, where they fell under the power of the French kings, and became French Bishops rather than the common Fathers of Christendom. In 1378 a disputed election plunged the Church for forty years into a civil war, in which the rival Popes did not scruple to stoop to the lowest acts of trickery and baseness. When an end was put to the Great Schism, as it was called, by the Council of Constance in 1417, the Popes were found more anxious to restore their personal authority and prevent any thorough reform

of their own court, than to forward the interests of religion or stem the advancing tide of Turkish success. It was not until they felt their security threatened that they began in real earnest to preach the Crusade, and it was just for that reason that the Princes of Europe refused to follow them. Popes and Kings were playing a game of mutual selfishness, only possible in an age of low morality and chilled religious life.

State of Religion in England, 1399–1460.—England did not escape the general contagion, but the decline of personal religion was less marked there than elsewhere. She had not experienced the fury of civil war, such as had desolated France. She was not split up like Italy into innumerable little sovereignties, whose government was marked by cruelty in the rulers, and want of public spirit in the ruled. She was not still the prey of feudal anarchy and burgher selfishness like Germany. In England the vices of society and of the Church were due to bad administration more than to internal decay. The Lancastrian Kings, weak in their title to the crown, made friends with the Pope by supporting Papal authority, and winking at if not participating in, Papal abuses. They made friends with the nobility by allowing them to absorb Church revenue. The statutes of Provisors and Præmunire became a dead letter. Church synods were rarely held. Few attempts at legislation were made by them. The Church lost her hold upon the lower classes in proportion as she became the prey of the upper. When Bishoprics were filled with the relations of the King and the greater nobles, when Abbacies and Priories became looked upon as the natural *provision for* the younger sons of the aristocracy,

who could wonder that the Church lost the sympathy and respect of the people, and had to surrender her authority over the conscience to Wiclif's poor priests. Whenever religion ceases to be enthusiastic it loses its power over the people. As the Church became aristocratic, the monasteries rich, the friars luxurious, the Bishops immersed in business, religion became formal, discipline relaxed, morality lowered. The Church had become choked with success, she had grown fat among the flesh-pots of Egypt. She needed to feel the sharp touch of adversity before the work of purification could begin.

Increase of Papal power.—Externally during this period the Church in England was falling more and more under the direct control of the Pope. In a time of great civil disturbance political questions were of too engrossing a nature to allow Parliament or the King to enter upon a harassing struggle with the Pope. The clergy thus deprived of the aid of the State, and startled by the outbreak of *Lollardism*, were unable, perhaps unwilling, to resist the Papal claims. The system of provisions flourished, and the buying of benefices became more flagrant. By obtaining the recognition of Beaufort (1426) and Kemp (1439) as Cardinals, and by the appointment of the latter to be *legate a latere (1452), the Pope obtained a very distinct advance of power, for both these appointments implied a right in the Pope, as Pope, to supersede the ordinary machinery

* A Legatus natus was the permanent representative of the Pope in a country ; a Legatus a latere his special envoy—answering somewhat to the "ambassador" and "special commissioner" of modern diplomacy. The authority of the latter was thus wholly dependent upon the Pope's will.

of the Church, and to give his own nominees precedence over the Archbishops and Bishops of England with a rank and authority which they must acknowledge and obey. By the date of the accession of Henry VII. (1485) the English Church was no more independent of the Papacy than was the French. Convocation only met formally. The affairs of the Church were administered by Papal Legates. Agents of the Pope travelled about the country unquestioned, granting dispensations and selling indulgences.

Deterioration of the Clergy.—Internally the evils which riches had brought with them were no less plainly visible. The monasteries, being for the most part free of all episcopal control, and dependent solely upon the Pope, suffered much from the want of an effective and ready discipline. In some cases where the Abbots were lax or vicious, as at S. Albans, they fell into extreme licentiousness.

The friars to maintain their popularity relapsed into coarseness and buffoonery. Having once fallen away from the strict rule of self-sacrifice, they became grasping, selfish, and ambitious. It is never fair to any part of society to take the writings of satirists as undoubted evidence of its moral condition. Yet it seems impossible to doubt, from the reiterated accusations of writers of all kinds in the fifteenth century, that the friars had degenerated with a rapidity only equalled by that of their rise, and had become in too many cases serious hindrances to religious progress.

It is more difficult to estimate the condition of the parish clergy. They continued to suffer from the *absorp*tion of benefices by the monasteries. The fashion

for founding chantries, to which a priest was attached
in order to say mass for repose of the founder's soul,
diverted from them much of the wealth which would
otherwise have flowed to the parish churches, and
thus tended to depress the parish priest's rank in the
social scale. Nevertheless, it is observable that the
parish clergy do not fall under the lash of the satirist
in the same way as do their rivals the monks and the
friars. In Chaucer the poor parson is held up to
admiration as the model of Christian life.

The Ecclesiastical Courts.—One of the worst abuses,
and one which pressed especially hard upon the parish
clergy and the laity, was the condition of the ecclesias-
tical courts. The courts of the province and of the
diocese exercised a general control over the morals and
manners of both clergy and laity. They had the power
of citing people before them for breaches of Church
discipline and morality. This power, which originally
was part of the Bishop's paternal authority over his dio-
cese, and was intended to be used for the reformation of
morals, was turned by the ecclesiastical lawyers into a
means of exercising a petty tyranny of a galling and
inquisitorial character. Ecclesiastical law since the
introduction into England of the Roman canon law
by Archbishop Theobald in 1143 had become a very
complicated and scientific subject. The lawyers who
studied it were paid by fees from the suitors, of which
the Bishop received a share ; so it was to the interest of
the lawyers to increase the fees as much as possible, and
of the Bishops to wink at the irregularity. This abuse
grew daily worse and more inveterate, till it seemed
incapable of redress. Archbishop Warham (1503)
attempted a reformation and failed. Wolsey, more

politic but less sensitive, never dared to try the experiment.

Personal Religion.—Yet with all this there must have been much true and deep personal religion in the fifteenth century. The tide of generosity had not yet begun to ebb. Gifts poured in to churches and shrines in greater abundance than before. Buildings more spacious, more skilfully built and more richly decorated, though perhaps of less structural beauty, continued to rise all over the country. Never in the history of Christian art was the sense of form and of colour so delicate, and devotional expression so chaste and true. It is impossible to believe that men and women who designed and produced the fresco painting, the embroidery, and the glasswork of the fifteenth century were devoid of sincere religion. It is true that their religion was inclined to be sentimental and superstitious in character. It lacked the robust manliness of thirteenth century Christianity. It centred round shrines such as those of S. Thomas of Canterbury, and Our Lady of Walsingham. It developed great richness of external effect. It tended to depreciate the central truths of revelation in favour of local worship of favourite saints. In its patronage of pilgrimages it gave a religious sanction to an Englishman's love of travel. Nevertheless it is obvious that, in spite of such weaknesses, an age which could produce so much of the truest spirit of generous self-sacrifice, so much of what is noblest in Christian art, so many manuals and primers of devotion, so many serious works of constructive theology, must have been deeply imbued with religious instinct.

The Universities, 1200–1300.—In the thirteenth

century Oxford and Cambridge had become, chiefly through the influence of the friars, great intellectual centres. Students flocked there from all parts of the world. Welshmen, Normans, and Gascons, all found a home at Oxford and formed no unimportant part of its intensely democratic and cosmopolitan society. A university which produced S. Edmund Rich, Roger Bacon, Duns Scotus, and William Ockham stood second only to Paris in the estimation of men of learning.

The Collegiate system.—To exercise moral discipline, and provide religious training for the thousands who flocked within the walls of a mediæval university, was the work of the Church. Colleges were founded by the liberality of Churchmen, where students young and old might live a common life, in obedience to a common discipline, meeting together daily in a common chapel and a common hall. So grew up the Collegiate system, which is peculiar to the English Universities; and it was through the colleges mainly that the Church preserved her influence over both the teaching and the training of the student. Later times saw a further development of the same idea. William of Wykeham and Henry VI., by founding schools for boys at Winchester (1382) and Eton (1441), and connecting them with their Colleges of S. Mary Winton at Oxford and King's at Cambridge, sought to give a better education than the monastery schools had hitherto done, equally under the guidance of the Church, but with a more perfect and extended training.

Objects of the Educational Movements.—Thus were laid the foundations of the English public school system. It had a double object—to take education out of the sole control of the monks and the friars, and,

E

while making it broader in scope and more effective, to bind it none the less closely to the Church. Up to the very beginning of the Reformation the foundation of colleges and schools continued. Most of the great ecclesiastics of the fifteenth century—Chichele, Waynflete, Fox, Colet, Wolsey—are found among the lists of founders and benefactors. Gradually the friars, now grown pedantic and ignorant, were forced to loose their hold upon the Universities. The seculars assumed the lead, and once again, just at the close of the fifteenth century, Oxford was seen, as in the thirteenth century, attracting the greatest scholars of the world to her feet. At Oxford Colet and Erasmus lectured (1499); Sir Thomas More, Linacre, and Wolsey were educated; and it was Oxford that Wolsey intended to make the scene of his magnificent foundation of Cardinal's College (1529), which with its dean, canons, chaplains, and students was to become the centre of the intellectual and religious life of England. Henry VIII. in succeeding to Wolsey's property, did not adopt his educational ideas. He exercised the rights of a conqueror rather than the privileges of a parent, and Christ Church remains but a faint shadow of what Cardinal's College would have been. Yet the educational movement of the fifteenth century cannot be justly said to have failed. Looked at as a whole, it was a distinct attempt on the part of the Church to give to the nation, under her own care and out of her own funds, teaching fully abreast of the highest knowledge of the day, combined with training which should best fit the youth of England to become good Christians as well as good *citizens.* The results of such an attempt must needs

be slow. The Reformation came before it had had time fully to develope, and turned the energy of the nation into other channels. That it should have been made at all shows a statesmanlike power to appreciate the dangers of the age and the wants of the Church, which the ordinary religious history of the century would hardly lead us to expect.

State of Religion at the Accession of Henry VIII., 1509.—It was clear to all thinking men that some great change must be near at hand. Abroad the Church was in a far worse plight than she was in England. The Popes were politicians, warriors, profligates, or sensualists, none of them in any true sense of the word religious. The Papal court was corrupt to its core. Justice was perverted, places both ecclesiastical and civil, openly sold. Throughout Italy the morals of both clergy and laity were hopelessly bad. The spirit of paganism, revived by the Renascence, was devouring what little remained of faith. In Europe the Church had fallen far behind in the race for learning. Instead of being the teacher of mankind, she had become the butt of the learned. And what was worst of all, there seemed to be no remedy. There had been many efforts at reform, and as many failures. Constitutional attempts to reform the whole Church by means of General Councils summoned by Pope and Emperor, such as the Councils of Constance (1414) and Basel (1431), had failed one and all directly they attempted to touch the real plague spot—the Papal Court. The attempt at personal reformation, made by Savonarola at Florence (1490), had been transient and local in its influence. In England there had been the educational attempts at a gradual

reformation of society, of which we have just been speaking, but they were too slow in their operation, and too purely intellectual in their nature, to have much direct effect upon corruption so inveterate. There had been the greater attempt of Wiclif (1370), directed not only to a personal reformation of life, but to an alteration of doctrine. But one attempt at reform after another had failed. Society was changing. The royal power was rapidly becoming supreme. The nobility were dependent upon the Crown. The Church was rich, aristocratic, and corrupt. With an ecclesiastical administration full of abuses, ecclesiastical independence suppressed, learning slipping quickly out of the hands of the Church, religion often unreal and superstitious, reformation apparently hopeless, it was obvious that a change could not long be delayed, and when it did come it would be sharp and searching. The question was, From what quarter would the blow be struck?

CHAPTER VI.

THE REFORMATION. 1530–1563.

The Divorce of Henry VIII., 1525–1533.—Perhaps no great movement in the history of any country took its origin from a more discreditable cause than did the Reformation in England. Henry VIII., tired of his wife Catherine of Arragon (1527), despairing of ever having a son by her, and being in love with Anne Boleyn, asked the Pope to pronounce that his marriage with Catherine had been void from the beginning, because she had been his brother Arthur's wife. This the Pope (Clement VII.) was unable to do, without also declaring void a bull of dispensation for the marriage which had been solemnly granted by his predecessor, Julius II.; and at the same time quarrelling with the Emperor Charles V., Catherine's nephew, in whose power he then happened to be. Obviously he could do neither of these things, and Henry acting on the advice of Cromwell, decided to take the matter into his own hands, and do for himself what Clement would not do for him. On Warham's death, in 1532, he appointed Cranmer, a pliable man, Archbishop of Canterbury. He married Anne Boleyn in February, 1533; and in May, Cranmer pronounced the marriage between Henry and Catherine null and void. The Pope

refused to acknowledge the validity of the sentence, and Henry proceeded to carry out his often repeated threat, of declining from the obedience of the Roman See. In this he appealed to the full strength of the national feeling of independence, which had found so decided an expression in the anti-papal legislation of the Middle Ages, and he offered to the clergy a short and easy way of ridding themselves once for all of the intolerable Papal exactions.

Attitude of the Clergy.—The attitude of the clergy, however, was that of suspicious acquiescence rather than approval. They were pleased at the thought of gaining relief from the Papal exactions. They were no great friends of the Pope. They were jealous of the monks. But they could not help feeling that to decline from the obedience of Rome would be a violation of ecclesiastical order approaching perilously near an act of schism, and a change in the constitution of the Church which could not fail greatly to increase the power of the Crown and decrease their own. Throughout the Reformation the clergy were in the position of men carried along by a tide they cannot control and dare not stem. At the very outset they found themselves completely at the King's mercy. Henry knew that if he wished successfully to impose his will upon the nation, he must procure the acquiescence of the Church and the support of the nobility. The latter he purchased by the suppression of the monasteries, and the confiscation of their estates. To secure the former he had a weapon ready-made to his hand.

The Præmunire.—Wolsey in the days of his greatness had, at the King's personal request, been appointed *by the Pope to* be his Legate in England (1517), and

in that capacity had sat to decide questions which had arisen in the King's divorce suit. But by exercising the Legatine power he had broken the Statute of Præmunire, and the clergy in obeying him had become implicated in his guilt. By a refinement of cruelty Henry proceeded to punish them for an obedience which a few years ago he would have enforced. Convocation had to purchase their pardon by a heavy fine (1531), and in addition, to acknowledge the King to be "supreme head of the English Church so far as is allowed by the law of Christ." This formulary of the supremacy was then embodied in an Act of Parliament without the qualifying words, and all clergy and state officials were required to take an oath recognizing it, subject to the penalties of treason. Under this statute Bishop Fisher and Sir Thomas More were beheaded, and the monks of the Charterhouse tortured and starved to death (1535). When methods such as these were resorted to in order to compel obedience ; when Henry had in his armoury a weapon so potent as the Præmunire ; the assent of Convocation and of the clergy to the assertion of the independence of the English Church can hardly perhaps be considered to have been free and unbiassed. Yet, with all due allowance for this fact, it is undoubtedly true that Henry had the bulk of the clergy and of the laity with him in his anti-papal policy.

Different phases of the Reformation Movement.—In the course of the Reformation in England there are four distinct phases to be noticed. (1) The assertion of the independence of the English Church; (2) The consequent re-statement of her formularies and rearrangement of her services ; (3) The unsuccessful attempt to make the

Reformation in England identical with the Protestant Reformation in Germany; and (4) The settlement of the constitution, doctrine, and liturgy of the Church under Elizabeth. In the first two of these phases the clergy gave a loyal and hearty adherence to Henry. The third—the work of Edward VI., Somerset, and Northumberland—divided the Church sharply into three parties, and made further separation almost inevitable. The last was in its nature of necessity a compromise, and like most compromises succeeded in uniting the cautious and the indifferent at the expense of energy and vitality.

The Constitutional Reformation, 1529–1535.—The declaration of the independence of the English Church is contained in three Acts of Parliament, based upon a petition of Convocation. (1) The Act in restraint of the payment of Annates—passed in 1532, but not put into force till 1533—took away the Pope's executive power in England, and declared that the English Church had full authority to consecrate her own Bishops and administer her own affairs, apart from the interference of Rome. (2) The Act in restraint of Appeals, passed in 1533, took away the Pope's judicial power in England, and declared that the English Church had full authority—both on account of her imperial position, as well as by historical precedent—to finally decide all causes for herself which touched the law divine. (3) The Act of the submission of the clergy, passed in 1534, embodied an agreement entered into by Convocation that they could only legally be assembled by the King's writ, and their canons only legally be enforced with the *King's sanction*. Subsequently, other Acts annexed

to the Crown such rights of holding visitations and redressing abuses, as had formerly been enjoyed by ecclesiastical authority. By these Acts the future relations of the Church to the Pope and to the Crown were defined, and the breach with Rome made complete. The Pope would not acknowledge what had been done, and a suspension of intercourse accordingly took place, which was eventually turned into open hostility by the action of Pius V., who, by excommunicating Elizabeth in 1570 and sending missionaries into England, treated it as a heretical country, and established rival services to those of the Church.

Suppression of the Monasteries, 1536–1539.—The Constitutional Reformation had thus brought about a breach between the Church of England and the Pope, but as long as the monasteries retained their influence, Henry felt that his success was incomplete. The monks were almost to a man adherents of the Papacy. Their position as the chief confessors of the laity gave them exceptional advantages of exerting an influence hostile to the Court. Their wealth was proverbial, their reputation deteriorated. The temptation of filling his own pockets and binding the nobility firmly to his cause by making the most of the delinquencies of the monks was one which Henry could not resist. In Cromwell, whom he appointed his Vicar-General in 1535, he found an able and perfectly unscrupulous minister. In 1536 a commission appointed to visit the smaller monasteries, disclosed in their report immorality so flagrant, and idleness so inveterate, that Parliament ordered their suppression, and vested their property in the Crown. Three years later, in 1539, the larger monasteries were treated in the same way,

and Henry gathered a harvest of spoil, in the shape of land, and plate, and jewels, such as had not fallen to the lot of a king since Alaric the Goth sacked Rome. It is very difficult to say how far so trenchant a policy can be defended. There is no doubt that immediate personal advantage, both political and pecuniary, weighed much with Henry. The use he made of the wealth which he had acquired so lightly was as bad as bad could be. It was mainly spent, either among his courtiers or at the gaming table. There is good reason to think that the reports of the commissioners were in many cases absolutely false, in others grossly exaggerated. Parliament itself acknowledged in 1536 the piety and good discipline of the larger monasteries which it suppressed in 1539 as hot-beds of vice. There is no doubt at all that the commissioners employed by Cromwell, especially the most active of them, Drs. London, Leighton, and Ap Rice, were men of bad character and coarse mind, who fully understood the nature of the work they were expected to do. Probably it is not far from the truth to say that many of the smaller monasteries deserved suppression, and that Cromwell and the Commissioners used the undoubted vice of the few to procure the suppression of all.

The Liturgical Reformation, 1536–1549. — The breach with Rome made some alteration of the old service-books necessary. The complicated and elaborate nature of the services themselves made it desirable, while the increase in numbers and influence of a party who wished to approximate the Church of England to the Lutheran model, rendered a statement *of doctrine* valuable. Accordingly, in the last ten

years of Henry's life (1537–1547) appeared in quick succession The Ten Articles; the Institution of a Christian man; and the Necessary Erudition of any Christian man; books which contained statements of the doctrine of the Church on most disputed points, and sought to combine Catholic doctrine about the Church and the Sacraments with teaching more or less Lutheran on Justification. By Royal Injunction issued in 1538, a copy of the Bible in English was ordered to be placed in every parish church, and all images which had been put to superstitious uses to be taken down. In 1544 the Litany in English, much as we have it now, was first used. In 1549 the committee, which had been for some time busy over the re-arrangement of the services, produced the book of Common Prayer known as the first Prayer-book of Edward VI. This book, having first received the sanction of Convocation, was made statute-law by being annexed to the Act of Uniformity passed in 1549. It was mainly a simplification of the old service-books. It contained in one small volume the essential parts of some four or five books. It retained the general character of the old services. Very little new matter was added. The Reformers sought, by the use of the English language instead of Latin, by the simplification of the old complicated services, and by the adoption of a ritual similar to but simpler than the old, to preserve the general character of the worship of the Church, and at the same time to make it understood by the people, the common act of the whole congregation. The book has undergone revision in 1552, 1559, 1603, and 1662; but none of these revisions have seriously altered the character

impressed upon it from the first. It has become the devotional manual of the majority of Englishmen, and has more powerfully affected the religious life of the nation than any other book except the Bible. Sacramental in conception, and Catholic in character, it has remained a living witness to historical Christianity in later Puritan and Latitudinarian days.

Growth of a Protestant Party, 1525–1553.—Very early in Henry's reign a band of men at Cambridge, called the Christian Brothers, had imbibed Protestant opinions, and many of them were compelled by Sir T. More when Chancellor to "carry a faggot" and do public penance for spreading the anti-episcopal tracts of Tyndale, the translator of the Bible. After the King's quarrel with the Pope, the Lutherans abroad made many attempts to enlist England on their side, and arrange terms of agreement with the English Church. In spite however of the efforts of Cranmer, who was at this time a Lutheran at heart, nothing came of them, as Henry steadily refused to surrender his orthodoxy, and the Lutherans conscientiously declined to acknowledge the justice of his divorce from Catherine. Except in a very few cases, Lutheran doctrine obtained no hold upon the people of England. It was far otherwise with the doctrines of Zwingli and Calvin. The Sacramentaries, as they were at first called, from the distinctive tenet of Zwingli, that in the Sacrament of the Holy Communion there is no mystery, but a mere commemoration of our Lord's death, soon attracted many ardent disciples; and in the reign of Edward VI. numbered among their sympathizers, not only Bishops like Hooper, Coverdale, and Ridley, but *the Protector* Somerset, his rival Northumberland, and

the young King himself. Under their auspices an effort was made to carry the Reformation a great deal further—to effect a definite breach, not merely with the Papal system, but with the Church of the past, and to make the Church of England a purely Protestant body, in close affinity with the Calvinism of the Continent.

The Protestant Reformation.—Edward VI. lived too short a time for so great a scheme. Still considerable progress was made. Foreign Reformers were introduced into England and given benefices, although they had never received Episcopal Ordination. All images and shrines, pictures and altars, were demolished in parish Churches, and wooden tables introduced. The old service-books were destroyed. Convocation was rarely called. A new revision of the Prayer-book was undertaken, which never received the assent of Convocation, but was imposed by Act of Parliament alone (1552). By this book the use of Vestments in the celebration of the Holy Communion was forbidden, and alterations made in the structure of the services, which diminished the resemblance to the old books. By Royal and Episcopal injunctions, all vestments and articles of altar furniture were ruthlessly destroyed. Rarely has there been such a wanton destruction of art treasures as took place in this reign—rarely such cynical disregard of reverence and even of propriety. The Churches despoiled, defaced, desecrated, were often either seized by the King or handed over to the care of some nobleman's footman or gamekeeper to perform the necessary services, while his patron pocketed the income. Nothing could exceed the scurrility and blasphemy of the Protestant mobs, who undertook the self-imposed

duty of purifying the Churches, and driving out superstition. Such conduct brought its own retribution. Men disgusted at the fanaticism and selfishness of Edward's reign welcomed Mary to the throne and were even prepared to acquiesce in the restoration of Papal authority.

The Catholic Reaction, 1553–1558.—They were not however prepared to see England the handmaid of Spain, or the scene of a religious persecution. The authority of the Pope over England was solemnly restored, and formal absolution given to the nation in 1554 by Cardinal Pole for its separation from Rome. But the revival of Papal power in England, coupled with the horrible persecutions that followed, made permanent re-union between England and Rome impossible. Just as it was the triumph of Protestantism under Edward VI. that made it impossible for the disciples of Zwingli and of Calvin honestly to accept the Elizabethan settlement; so it was the triumph of Papalism under Mary that made it impossible for the adherents of the Pope loyally to recognise the Anglican position. Neither party, having once been supreme, could renounce the principles for which it had fought, or forget the ascendancy that it had won.

The Elizabethan Settlement, 1558.—Elizabeth therefore had a difficult part to play. England was divided into three parties. Of these, two, the Papal and the Protestant, knew exactly what they wanted, and were full of the zeal which an extreme cause so often gives. The third—the middle party—was small in numbers, and suffered from the indecision which usually attends a policy of compromise. Elizabeth boldly espoused *their cause.* Setting before herself as a model the

policy of Henry VIII,—anti-Papal as regards Rome
and Spain, but Catholic as regards England—she
nevertheless found herself obliged from force of
circumstances to make concessions to the Protestants,
in order to induce them to acknowledge a Church
polity which was based upon principles quite different
from their own. This she did by taking the second
Prayer-book of Edward VI. as the standard of worship,
with the addition of a rubric (generally known as the
Ornaments Rubric) which authorized the ceremonial
of the first book. By the Act of Uniformity (1559)
the use of this Prayer-book was made compulsory upon
all the clergy. By the Act of Supremacy, passed in
the same year, the royal authority over the Church
was revived in much the same terms as it had
originally been declared by Henry VIII. and agreed
to by Convocation; except that the Queen took the
title of Supreme Governor instead of Supreme Head.
By the publication of the Thirty-nine Articles in 1563,
containing statements on certain doctrinal points,
gathered from Catholic, Lutheran, and Calvinistic
sources, and often patient of as many interpretations,
the Reformation settlement was complete.

Character of the English Reformation.—The Church
of England thus assumed the position she was to hold
in the future. She had passed through the Reforma-
tion period. There was no longer any doubt what
type of religion England was to profess, however
many and great might be the controversies about the
working of the ecclesiastical machine. (1) It was to
be distinctly anti-Papal, but anti-Papal in constitution
rather than in doctrine. The denial of Papal supremacy
is placed on historical, not on religious, grounds—on

the right of the English Church to be independent of
any foreign power, not on a denial of the right of the
Pope to be the Vicar of Christ. (2) It was to be
in close connection with the State. The Kings of
England had always claimed, and frequently exercised,
a supremacy over the Church as part of the general
obligation which made a Christian King responsible for
the proper government of all his subjects, whether
ecclesiastical or lay. But this supremacy was in the
future to be much more comprehensive than in the past.

The Royal Supremacy.—The Act of Supremacy—
passed in 1535, and re-enacted in 1559—expressly in-
cluded among the powers of the Crown (1) the right
to summon Convocation ; (2) to veto its legislation ;
(3) to visit ecclesiastical persons, and redress abuses ;
(4) to receive appeals in ecclesiastical causes, and
appoint delegates to hear and determine them ; (5) to
nominate by "letters missive" persons to be elected to
Bishoprics. These powers were clear and unmistake-
able, laid down in the statute and acquiesced in by the
Church. No question could arise about them. But
besides them was the acknowledgment by Convoca-
tion (1531) that the Crown was the "Supreme Head
of the English Church, as far as is allowed by the
law of Christ." This had by Henry VIII. been in-
terpreted to imply an absolute power of administration
over the Church, if not a claim to be the source of all
her authority. Under cover of its vagueness, Henry
had appointed Cromwell to be a dictator in all religious
matters, superseding the authority of Bishops and
Synods (1535). He had passed laws binding upon
the Church merely by his own proclamation. He had
even made Bishops take out licenses from the Crown

to exercise their powers. These, like many other such acts of high-handed prerogative in civil affairs, were nothing less than sheer tyranny. It was not likely that Henry VIII. would be a constitutional monarch in matters affecting the Church, when he was an arbitrary despot in matters affecting the State. Elizabeth took care to disclaim powers of this sort. She was far from intending to loose her real hold over the Church, which she considered should be the humble handmaid of monarchy; but she was equally determined not to claim to be the source of any spiritual jurisdiction. She took the title "Governor" instead of "Head," implying thereby subordinate not primary authority. She explained in a royal declaration that the power she claimed by her supremacy, was to see that all estates of men in her realms were properly governed, without the intervention of any foreign power. She further emphasized and enforced this view by promulgating by royal authority the Articles of 1563; and James I. adopted it by giving the royal sanction to the Canons of 1604.

Dependence upon the Crown.—The Crown then did not claim in any sense to be the source of ecclesiastical authority or to interfere in spiritual things; but it necessarily exerted a far greater power over the Church than it had done before. Deprived of the help of the Pope against the King; weakened in Parliament by the loss of the mitred Abbots in the House of Lords; in the nation by the abolition of the monastic orders; and above all, by the religious divisions which were the direct result of the Reformation; the Church had no choice but to cling closely to the royal power, and depend upon the Government for her

security and protection. Thus grew up insensibly a habit of looking to the State for everything. Little by little, first the Crown and then the Parliament absorbed one after another of the ordinary adminis- trative functions of the Church—not deliberately, but simply because they were all-powerful while she was weak, until in the present day matters have reached a dead-lock. The Church cannot act without Parlia- ment, and Parliament will not act for the Church if it can help it. The royal supremacy is exercised, not by the anointed and responsible Christian Prince, but by the chairman of a committee of the majority of Parliament, who may be of any religion or of none at all.

Results of the Reformation.—The changes brought about by the Reformation permeated the whole of society. The Church was at once deposed from the position of authority over the thought and the life of mankind, which she had maintained more or less throughout the Middle Ages. She became merely one among many different religions, though the chief of them. She became isolated—divided off by her peculiar position from both the Roman Catholic and the Pro- testant interests of Europe. She became immersed in controversy, from having to defend herself from Papist on one side and Puritan on the other. Her greatest intellects, such as Hooker, Jeremy Taylor, and Chillingworth, became necessarily controversialists. Englishmen whether Churchmen or not became necessarily polemical in their religion.

With the destruction of the Monastery Churches, of the shrines and images, and the abolition of ceremo- *nial* and beauty in the services, religious worship

became inartistic and undevotional. The sense of mystery and of reverence was lost. Religion became much more of a personal thing, confined to each man's own breast, with which he alone was concerned, than of a common privilege and a common obligation, which he shared with his neighbour, and expressed corporately in a common worship. The clergy lost both political and religious influence. During the progress of the Reformation many appointments of the most disgraceful nature were made. The appetite for Church property was whetted by the appropriation of the monasteries (1536), the chantries and the guilds (1552) by the King, and many nobles and gentry seized the profits of the benefices in their gift. It is not surprising that complaints are rife in the reign of Elizabeth that the clergy are too few, their character bad, and their learning contemptible. Restrictions on marriage having been done away, their poverty soon became a serious question. Personal purity among the clergy has been undoubtedly greatly improved by the change ; but the efficiency of their work was often terribly impaired by a constant struggle against poverty, and a consequent lowering of themselves and their children in the social scale. On the general tone of society the Reformation in England cannot be said to have had an elevating effect. Never was the Court more greedy and profuse, the nobility more selfish, and the judges more venal. Neither of the great movements of the Reformation or Counter-Reformation in England seemed able to produce a hero, they hardly produced a single admirable character, except, perhaps, Archbishop Parker (1559). The low religious level which this shows, made the work of

statesmen in defining the altered relations of the
Church to Pope and King easier.   It made the task of
regaining her mastery over society under those altered
condition impossible.   Such was the punishment she
has had to endure for her past neglect of opportunities
so rare.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RISE OF PURITANISM AND DISSENT.
1563-1603.

Religious Parties in England (1559).—The great religious change which had passed over England had for the first time in her history brought to the front the problem of religious division. The beginning of Elizabeth's reign saw three distinct religious parties in existence, whose principles were completely at variance with one another. First, there were the Papists, who holding the doctrine of Papal supremacy, believed that there could be no true Church, except in communion with the Pope and under his superintendence. Secondly, there were the Anglicans, who maintained that the Church of England was a true part of the Catholic Church, inasmuch as she held the primitive faith and inherited valid Orders by direct succession from the Apostles, and that in declining from the obedience of the Pope she had cast off usurped authority and not offended against ecclesiastical order. Thirdly, there were the Protestants, who, disbelieving in the divine origin of the Church, disregarding the necessity of Episcopal Succession and Orders, and looking at high Sacramental doctrine as

idolatrous, sought to found a new society in the place of the Church, the leading principles of which should be the right of private judgment, and the denial of Sacramental grace. It was obvious that there could be no lasting union between those whose principles on such matters differed so widely. On the other hand no one conceived it possible that there could be more than one religion in one country, or that it would be anything less than a gross dereliction of duty on the part of the government to permit such a scandal. It was by very slow degrees that the real solution of the political problem brought about by religious division, was found in toleration. That was a boon which the Puritans of Elizabeth's time would have rejected with scorn. They claimed to be the Church. They wanted England to be Puritan, not that some Englishmen who wished it should be allowed to be Puritan.

Theory of the Christian Prince.—According to the theory of government held by all men in the sixteenth century, it was the duty of the sovereign to care for the souls of his people. He was responsible for them. He was bound, therefore, to protect them from error, by punishing it and suppressing it whenever it arose. Hence came the necessity for each nation to profess a State religion, for each ruler to maintain it; and hence often came a confusion in men's minds between the religion which was maintained and the power which maintained it. This confusion, under the name of Erastianism, has been since erected into a deliberate political system, the principle of which is the complete supremacy of the State over both the doctrine and the *discipline* of the Church.

Policy of Elizabeth towards the Catholics.—Elizabeth no more than Philip II. or Mary was prepared to tolerate diversities of religion. By the Act of Uniformity, passed in 1559, everyone was obliged to attend his parish church, and no one might conduct any service except that contained in the Prayer-book. This at once forced all those who disagreed with the established settlement of religion to declare themselves. Of over 9,000 clergy only 200 resigned rather than accept the Act; but many of the nobility and gentry refused to attend their parish churches, and continued to go to Mass whenever they could. From the first the government tried to prevent the private celebration of Mass, and to punish the recusants, as those were called who refused to go to Church, with fine and imprisonment. Political events abroad were tending to put forward Elizabeth as the champion of liberty and of Protestantism against the Papacy, the Guises, and Philip II. Elizabeth became the great rival and hated enemy of Philip, and in order to harass her, advantage was taken by her foes of the existence of a large body of men in her dominions who did not conform to her religion. Philip hoped to induce the English Roman Catholics to rise against a heretical Queen in favour of her rival, Mary of Scotland; and in 1569 an insurrection in favour of Mary did break out in the northern counties. In 1568 a college was founded at Douai for the purpose of training English missionary priests for the conversion of their country. In 1570 Pius V. solemnly excommunicated Elizabeth, pronounced her deposed, and forbade any Catholic to obey her. From 1574 bands of missionaries began to come from the seminaries, too eager for the reconciliation

of England to the Pope to be thoroughly loyal to an excommunicated Queen.

The Elizabethan Persecution, 1571. — Elizabeth found herself confronted by a great danger. The Roman Catholics found themselves in a great dilemma. If they conformed to the law they were untrue to the Pope, if they obeyed the Pope they must be disloyal to the Queen. Elizabeth could not afford to be doubtful of their allegiance. She acted at once on the supposition that they would obey the Pope. A series of repressive Acts were passed, making it high treason to affirm that the Queen was a heretic, to publish Bulls from Rome (1571), to reconcile any-one to the Roman Church, and ordering all Jesuits and Priests to leave the kingdom (1581). Then was begun a persecution in some respects as horrible as that of Mary. Agents were employed to search out recusants, and lay plots to entrap them. Torture was freely used. Men were persecuted because they were Roman Catholics, on the plea that Roman Catholics must logically be traitors. The brunt of the persecu-tion fell upon the priests; but it was extended to the laity of all classes, and even to women.

Position and Influence of the Roman Catholics.— Pius V. had organized the Roman Catholics in Eng-land as a definite religious body apart from the Church of England, and had placed them as far as he was able in opposition to the Crown and the nation. By so doing he incurred odium, and invited persecution, which has lasted almost to our own day. Roman Catholics became identified in men's minds with the enemies of the nation. After the Gunpowder Plot *(1605) they were* looked upon as dark and sinister con-

spirators. Whatever might be the complexion of the
government, whether despotic or revolutionary, Puritan
or High Church, Whig or Tory, there was no redress
for the grievances of the Roman Catholics. They
were not admitted to the franchise till 1830. Accord-
ingly as a body they have but slightly affected the
religious life of the nation. Small in numbers, insig-
nificant in talent, debarred from political influence,
not particularly remarkable for devotion, their chief
importance has arisen from their connection with
the religion of Western Europe, and their numerical
preponderance in Ireland.

The Puritans.—The Protestants were in a very
different position. They had for the most part derived
their religious views from the followers of Zwingli
and Calvin, at Zürich and Geneva, where they had
found a refuge during the persecutions of Mary's
reign (1555). They were by no means prepared
to acquiesce in a settlement of religion which was
based upon Episcopacy, and which authorized the use
of vestments in the celebration of the Eucharist.
They accepted it as a step in advance, hoping in a few
years to be able to get rid one by one of the points to
which they objected. This, owing to the determined
attitude of the Queen, they found it impossible to do
directly; but indirectly, especially in dioceses where
the Bishop was a Calvinist, they were often able to
do much as they liked. They replaced altars by
movable tables, administered the Communion to the
people sitting, discarded the use of the surplice, and
refused to make the sign of the Cross in Baptism.
Elizabeth, true to her principle of uniformity, urged
a policy of repression. In 1563, Archbishop Parker

published, on his own authority, but at the Queen's
command, a series of regulations called Advertise-
ments, with the object of enforcing the use of the
surplice, and an orderly ceremonial. This made some
of the more thorough-going Calvinists resign their
benefices. Being ousted from the Church, they began
to meet together in private to worship in their own
way, and thus formed the first body of Protestant
Dissenters who separated from the Church (1564).

Influence of Calvinism.—This vestiarian controversy,
as it was called, showed how deep was the difference
of opinion about religious matters in England. Cal-
vinism had aroused religious instincts which had been
dormant for a century. Men had become once more
earnestly, instead of merely decorously, religious; and
it was the middle classes, whose special work the
Reformation had been, and who were daily growing
in political power, who felt the impulse strongest.
Calvinism set before mankind a creed narrower than
that of the Church, a discipline more organized and
effective, a worship intensely personal. It found its
power in the doctrine of the infallibility of man. A
man predestinated, chosen by God to be His servant,
converted to His will, assured of that conversion by
personal evidence, unable permanently to fall from his
high station, had no need of ceremonial or Sacramental
assistance. Such an one naturally disbelived in the rule
of Bishops, who might or might not be converted; and
was impatient of any opposition from sinners, whether
of the world or of the Church. If, therefore, Calvinists
conformed to the Church of England, they did it for
the sake of convenience, not from conviction.

Nonconformist Calvinism, 1570-1649. — During

the time that the Church was largely Calvinistic;
namely, from the middle of Elizabeth's reign to the
death of Charles I., there were different parties of
Calvinists in England. Some, remaining in the
Church, staunchly opposed any increase of Episcopal
power or revival of ceremonial in worship, and were
generally known as the Puritan party. Others, look-
ing on the Church as too deeply implicated in abuses
ever to admit of reform, left her Communion, formed
themselves into separate religious bodies, and willingly
endured the persecution they met with at the hands
of the Crown and the High Commission Court.
When they found it impossible to worship in their
own way in security at home, they nobly preferred to ·
leave their country rather than abandon their faith,
and went self-banished some of them to Holland, and
some from thence to America (1620), there to lay the
foundations of the New England colonies on the per-
fect model of Calvinistic democracy.

The Presbyterians.—The Nonconformist Calvinists
who remained gradually developed into four distinct
bodies. (1) The Presbyterians, whose leading principle
is the assertion that by divine appointment the disci-
pline of the Church lies with the body of Presbyters,
not with the Bishops. Their chief leader was Cart-
wright, Professor of Divinity at Cambridge, who
established Presbyterian associations in several counties
about 1590. For a short time, under the Long Parlia-
ment (1645–1654), Presbyterianism became para-
mount in England; but in reality it has owed what
success it has achieved to the unpopularity of its
opponents, not to its own intrinsic power. As long as
Episcopacy meant the suppression of a popular Puri-

tanism, or the rigid assertion of unpopular monarchical authority, so long and so long only, Presbyterianism flourished. After its partial triumph at the time of the Commonwealth it quickly decreased in power, and for the last century can hardly be said to have exercised any considerable influence upon the religious life of England.

(2) *The Independents ;* or as they are now more often called the Congregationalists, were founded by Robert Browne, a Cambridge man, about 1570. The principle of Independency is the right of each congregation to settle its own doctrine, ritual, and discipline. The Church is therefore not one society, but a collection of societies, each of which is, by divine appointment, independent and self-governing. Separation is according to this view not an evil, but a duty ; and the true ideal of the Christian Church is to be found in separated congregations. During the reign of Elizabeth and the earlier Stuarts, Independency felt the weight of persecution. The Pilgrim Fathers of the *Mayflower*, who were the first colonists in New England (1620), were Independents, and so were most of those who left England to follow them to America. Nevertheless it continued to grow apace ; but it was not till the Commonwealth that it really acquired any great hold over Englishmen. It became the religion of the army, and of the bulk of Cromwell's party. Consequently, during his rule (1653–1658) it was the most powerful religion in England, and was very nearly made the State religion shortly before his death. At the Restoration (1660) it was on the Independents that the worst of the persecution fell ; and it is they that have *ever since been* the most strenuous opponents of the

Establishment, and the most rigid supporters of religious equality. This has often made them assume the appearance of a political rather than a religious body, and their influence upon England has been on the whole more political than religious. They represent the polemical side of Nonconformity, and have attracted their followers quite as much by the uncompromising war which they carry on as by the religion which they teach.

(3) *The Baptists.*—Towards the middle of Charles I.'s reign some earnest Independents, wishing to reform their own body on stricter lines, and influenced by Anabaptist opinions from Holland, founded the sect of Baptists. Pushing to an extreme the Calvinistic conception of the Church as a small body consisting exclusively of the elect, they denied the rite of Baptism to any who had not become members of this circle, and administered it according to the practice of the early Christians, by immersion. They are the most logical and consistent of Calvinists. They are founded upon the idea, common to all earnest men in all ages, of the hopeless wickedness of the world. Never however has any religious body been so completely the prey of division and of controversy. From the first they split into the two well-known divisions of Particular and General Baptists. In the eighteenth century they split again into two further divisions, and individual congregations in considerable numbers have always asserted their right to be free from all central control. In spite of this they have continued to increase, and have produced, perhaps, more men of mark than any other Nonconformist body—Bunyan, Robert Hall, and Spurgeon

among the best known. They are one of the most numerous sects in the United States. They have done much for the mission cause, especially in India. In England their influence upon the nation has not been equal to that of the Independents; but their hold over their own members is nevertheless close and powerful. Numerically few and disunited, they are for the most part religiously earnest, and act in accordance with their principles.

(4) *The Quakers.*—The religious movement which underlay the struggle between Charles I. and his Parliament had its spiritual as well as its political side, and to this the Quakers, founded by George Fox in 1646, owe their existence. They sought by a life of childlike simplicity, both religious and social, to attain to pure spirituality. It was the idea of enthusiasts, who sought after sanctity as the founders of monastic orders had sought after it, but without the protection of a religious rule. They have produced great men like Penn and Barclay. Their simplicity has ever made them attractive and lovable. They have shewn a singular capacity for business; but as a religious body their influence has been waning for many years, and it is said they are at the present time decreasing in numbers.

Result of Nonconformity.—In this way from the Puritanism of Elizabeth's reign sprang indirectly, if not directly, the bulk of English Nonconformity. The rise of Dissent is the result of the Reformation. It altered the whole character of English religion. In its train it brought of necessity religious toleration; and out of religious toleration has arisen the demand for religious equality. Slowly but surely men have

learned to see that it is impossible to enforce conformity to one religion, in a country where there are many religions. It is argued that where the State is bound to recognize all religions she must profess none. Nothing could be more opposed to the ideas of Henry VIII. than such a total reversal of his favourite doctrine of the responsibilities of the Christian Prince, yet it is the result of the Reformation movement which he began.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LAUDIAN MOVEMENT. 1603-1662.

Religious Condition of England, 1603.—The Stuarts
on their accession to the throne found the religious
condition of England very different to what it was
at the beginning of Elizabeth's reign. Then the
majority of the clergy and people were Catholic
in sympathy; the danger of a restoration of Papal
authority real; those who heartily accepted the
Prayer-book few. In 1603 all danger from Rome had
gone. With the death of Philip II., in 1598, the
thunder-clouds in the religious and political atmo-
sphere had cleared away, and men could breathe again
freely. The Universities and the bulk of the clergy
had become Calvinistic. The nation was rapidly
following their example. The more earnest were
already found among the Puritans. Yet the desire
for religious unity handed down from the Middle
Ages, and the consciousness of political unity which
resulted from the successful struggle with Spain under
Elizabeth, made men look with horror at organized
division of any sort. They accepted the established
religious formularies as part of the national arrange-
ments. At first they acquiesced in them suspiciously,

and tried hard to alter what they did not like. Then, by looking at that part which agreed with their own opinions and ignoring the rest, they naturally found only what they looked for, and soon became the champions instead of the critics, of a system so admirable. Thus the Prayer-book grew to be the chosen standard of all parties in the Church. It twined itself round the hearts of all, whether Anglican or Puritan, and from that time to this every controversialist looking at it through his own spectacles, has claimed it on his side, and loyally accepted as the whole the only part he has been able to see.

Neglect of Ceremonial, 1559–1625.—Controversy about ceremonial had in consequence much diminished in force, and James I. had but little difficulty in refusing the demands of the Nonconformists at the Hampton Court Conference in 1604. But his easy victory was in part owing to the fact that with the spread of Calvinist doctrine had come a practical neglect of the very points of ceremonial which were disputed. The Puritans were wise enough not to insist upon a victory in form when they were already enjoying its substance. Indeed, nothing could be more opposed to the dignified and ceremonious worship which the mediæval Church practised, and which Henry VIII. tried in the main to preserve, than the services of most English churches at the time of Elizabeth and James I. Many parishes were without incumbents, many incumbents were non-resident, many held more than one benefice. The churches were falling sadly out of repair. In some places the fonts had been defaced or destroyed, and small movable basins were used for Baptism. The Holy Table

stood in the middle of the church without covering
or protection. It was used as a place for the church-
wardens to write their accounts, as a receptacle for
hats, and sometimes as a convenient seat from which
to hear the sermon. Celebrations of Holy Communion
were infrequent, often only three times a year. Com-
municants either knelt, or sat, or stood, as they pre-
ferred. The clergy altered the services enjoined by
the Prayer-book as they liked; officiated in a surplice,
or in a cope, or in no surplice at all. The sermon
began to occupy the chief place in the service. In
order to listen to it with greater comfort pews—so
characteristic of the spirit of exclusiveness engendered
by Puritanism—began to encroach upon the floors of
the churches. In this way buildings which were in-
tended for a great act of united worship degenerated
into preaching-houses, and the service which was
intended to be the common act of all became a lecture
delivered to a few. Such a state of things was ob-
viously opposed to the letter of the Prayer-book and
the spirit of the Reformation. It was, however, the
natural result of Calvinistic and Puritan teaching.

Rival Systems within the Church, 1625–1660.—
Before long a reaction came, a reaction which was not
the work of any one man or of any one time; but
which was seen growing up gradually all over England,
and gained its strength from the fact that it was a
protest against the one-sided view of human nature
adopted by Puritanism, and was in harmony with the
ecclesiastical institutions which men had learned to
love. It began with doctrine. Hooker, in his
Ecclesiastical Polity, published in 1594, attacked the
very foundations of Presbyterianism by justifying

Episcopacy on the double ground of authority and reason. Bacon appealed confidently to reason in defence of the unity of the Church. Andrewes (1596) combated successfully the rigid Calvinism of the Lambeth Articles with weapons drawn from the Fathers. Life and practice as well as faith were soon affected. Men who had learnt, whether from authority or from reason, to look upon the Church as a divine institution, to believe that in her Sacraments alone were to be found the appointed means of union with God, naturally began to express those convictions in their worship, and try to justify them in their lives. Two types of Christian life were thus rudely opposed to each other in the English Church, the Catholic and the Puritan, and both have lived on side by side in her communion from that day to this. But it was not only in the study that this work was being done. There were men of learning like Andrewes and Jeremy Taylor, and also men of action like Hyde and Strafford, and men of devotion like George Herbert and Nicholas Ferrar.

William Laud, 1625–1641.—The man who has given his name to the movement, and who in his character and objects is generally supposed to represent what is good and what is ·bad in it, is William Laud. In reality he only represents one side. Circumstances made him a statesman. Nature had made him a disciplinarian, and the necessities of the times called this quality into special prominence, especially after his appointment to the Archbishopric of Canterbury, in 1633. That he was capable of being a great deal more than a drill-sergeant is shown by his controversy with the Jesuit Fisher, his success in

overcoming the Puritanism of Oxford, and his spiritual influence with men so different in character as Charles I., Hyde, and the Duke of Buckingham. But it is as a disciplinarian that he is best known to the world. Duty was the prevailing quality of his mind, and he set himself unflinchingly to carry out to the best of his ability what he conceived to be his special duty ; namely, to impose the discipline of the Church, as laid down in the canons and rubrics of the Prayer-book, equally upon all men. To do this he required the assistance of force, and the necessary force he found only in the royal prerogative. Unhesitatingly he used the royal prerogative to maintain the discipline of the Church, and pledged the influence of the Church to support the royal prerogative. Each assisted the other to fall. Wholly without sympathy, unable to command enthusiasm, or to understand how unity could exist without uniformity, he was just the man to become the victim of a system which he had really made successful. When the Church was restored to power by Charles II. (1660), the alterations enforced by Laud were tacitly adopted as the normal rule. Altars were placed at the east-end, and were railed off from the rest of the Church. Painted windows and organs reappeared. The service, everywhere orderly, testified to the continuity of the Church, and her sympathy with historical Christianity. Laud and the King he had served so faithfully but so ill-advisedly perished upon the scaffold. The Church was proscribed, her services forbidden, her clergy persecuted. The weapons of law and of force which Laud had used against the Puritans *were* turned against himself and his followers. But *when the Church* came back again from her exile, she

was purged for ever of Calvinism. She has been since, and may be again, Evangelical, Latitudinarian, or indifferent; but it was the work of Laud to prevent her from being any longer mainly Calvinistic.

Persecution of the Church, 1642–1660.—From the outbreak of the Civil War to the Restoration religious anarchy prevailed. Presbyterianism was the State religion in name after 1645; but in reality it never seems to have obtained much hold over any part of England except London and Lancashire. After the triumph of the Army, and the consequent rise of the Independents to power (1648), confusion became worse confounded. They neither abolished the Presbyterian Prayer-book, nor enforced its use. Each parish adopted whatever sort of religious service it pleased, provided it was not the service of the Church, and men of all sects seized upon the pulpits. England became a paradise for the fanatics, and it needed the strong hand of Cromwell to reduce this chaos into some sort of order. By means of the committees of Triers, and of Scandalous Ministers, appointed in 1654, he succeeded in his double purpose of ousting from the charge of parishes those who were either unfit or favourers of Episcopacy. The Church tried to continue her ministrations to her own people as best she could. Some of the Bishops remained in England and held Ordinations in secret. In some country parishes until the appointment of the Triers, the Prayer-book had still been used. Where the church itself had passed into other hands, it was usual to say the service from memory in a room. Many of the ousted clergy, by holding posts as tutors or schoolmasters, were able still to maintain some superintendence over their

flocks. Cromwell however in 1655 made it penal for
any dispossessed minister to hold any office, preach,
or administer the Sacraments, or use the Prayer-book ;
and from that time to the eve of the Restoration the
Church was forced to carry on her worship in the
strictest secrecy, and under the severest penalties.

Religion under the Commonwealth.—It is difficult
amid the war of jarring tongues to arrive at any true
estimate of the religious condition of England during
the Commonwealth. There was of course much
fanatical religion. Fifth-monarchy men, Levellers,
and similar sects were numerous. There was much
sober Calvinism of the Presbyterian and Independent
type, such as we see at its best in Fairfax and Milton.
There was much devoted Churchmanship in men such
as Hammond and Duppa and Juxon ; but under the
stern rule of Cromwell, far more repressive and inquisi-
torial than that of Laud, men did not dare to allow their
real feelings to have vent. The force of Puritanism
had spent itself in its victory. When it ceased to
be aggressive it ceased to command allegiance. It
stiffened into formalism, it lost its enthusiasm, it fast
became ridiculous. Men, restless under its chill re-
pression, looked back with regret to the milder sway
of the Church. In London, the eastern counties, and,
perhaps, in some few large towns, such as Bristol and
Hull, Presbyterianism was still all-powerful ; but the
majority of the nation, who at first had only acquiesced
in the overthrow of the Church, and never approved
it, much less desired it, were daily becoming more
and more anxious for her restoration, just as they were
becoming more and more anxious for the restoration
of the monarchy (1658)—not because they wished to

return to the despotism of Laud or of Charles, but because they wanted to be relieved from the despotism of the army and the anarchy of the Parliament, and return to quiet and well-regulated order under Church and King.

The Restoration, 1660.—The Restoration rendered permanent the religious division which was the direct result of the Reformation. After the success of the Separatists, after the overthrow of the Church, in the full tide of the Laudian movement, it was idle to think that Churchman and Calvinist could honestly unite in one religious body, and yet retain any shadow of their own principles. Just as the King returned as of right to his throne and to the privileges of monarchy, so the Church returned as of right to her dignity and emoluments. If she consented at the Savoy Conference (1661) to discuss the revision of the Prayer-book with the Puritans, it was not to arrange terms of alliance, but merely to understand and if possible remove, their objections. Submission, in fact, was the only alternative offered on either side. Baxter, the leading Puritan divine, was consumed by an ardent zeal for unity; but, like that of Cosin, or of Sheldon, who were the leaders of the Church party, it must be unity on his own terms. Naturally therefore, no common basis was found possible, and the Church proceeded to alter her worship in her own way; and by making it more conformable to ancient precedent and Catholic practice in the revision of 1662, made it more distasteful to the Puritans than ever.

Persecution of Nonconformists, 1661–1687.—This policy of the Church had the zealous support of Parliament. United together by a common overthrow the

Church and the Monarchy now enjoyed a common victory. The Royalist majority in Parliament saw no better way of proving their loyalty to the King, and perpetuating his power, than by placing the Church in assured political supremacy. Clarendon, Charles's chief minister, looked back to the government of Elizabeth as his model, and unhesitatingly revived her policy. It was clearly necessary, if England was again to profess the religion of the Catholic Church of Christ, that ministers who were in possession of her benefices should either be ordained by a bishop and conform to her teaching, or cease to receive her emoluments. On S. Bartholomew's day 1662, about two thousand Independent and Baptist ministers, who refused to accept the Prayer-book, were obliged to leave their benefices. This was perhaps unavoidable; but Parliament was not content with merely ousting them. It went on to try and prevent them from exercising their own religion by the Conventicle (1664) and Five Mile Acts (1665); and, what was far worse, by the Corporation Act (1661) and Test Act (1673) it made the reception of Holy Communion, according to the rites of the Church, a necessary prelude to the holding of all civil appointments. Nothing did more to weaken the religious influence of the Church than this iniquitous use of her holiest rite for political purposes.

Condition of the Clergy, 1660–1688. — Religion suffered greatly from its close admixture with politics. Ministers had used it as a political engine to advance the cause of monarchy, and the Church gladly responded to the appeal, and imposed the doctrine of *passive obedience* to the King upon her members, almost

as if it had been an article of her creed. The clergy, poor and dependent, became in many cases the mere hangers-on of the rich, powerless to rebuke or check the vices of their patrons. Among the higher clergy, especially among those whom the Laudian movement had touched, was a depth of learning, a sincerity of purpose, a reality of spiritual life, which had not been known in England since the Middle Ages. The Universities were again thronged with students. College Chapels were rebuilt. Colleges refurnished and refitted. The injured cathedrals were restored to something of their old magnificence, though in the prevalent classical style of the day. Posterity has agreed to look upon the Caroline divines as the best representatives of the Church of England. Bull and Pearson, the defenders and expounders of the creed; Sanderson and Taylor, the teachers of moral theology; Cosin and Gunning, the most learned of liturgiologists; Sancroft and Ken, the most saintly of English Churchmen, were all of them bishops during the Restoration period. But among laymen religious earnestness was no less real. Religious societies for deepening spiritual life, like the guilds of modern days, were formed in many places, and among their members were men like Evelyn and Boyle, the first president of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel, both of them members of the Royal Society. This shows how deep a hold the Church had upon the nation at the time of Charles II.; but personal religion was by no means confined to the Church. Among the Nonconformists were some of the most deeply religious men in England. Baxter's *Saint's Rest*, and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, have probably next to the Bible and

Prayer-book, done more to influence the religious life of England than any other books. It is true that Nonconformity had become to a great degree political, as the Church had done. The immorality and selfishness of the time of the later Stuarts, the growth of contemptuous irreligion, show that neither Church nor Dissent were fully able to cope with the difficulties they had to meet. They were, in fact, too much occupied with their own quarrels to appreciate the terrible loss of power religion had suffered, and suffered permanently, from the divisions the Reformation had brought.

CHAPTER IX.

THE REVOLUTION AND THE NON-JURORS.
1685-1714.

Policy of James II.—Charles II. has been described as a man who was impatient of Protestant heresy in all its forms, and of Christianity in all its precepts. Certainly it was his object to bind religion to the Crown by the doctrine of passive resistance. Having thus made it the handmaid of despotism, he would have liked to use the supreme authority recognised in him as King and Governor of the Church, to re-establish Roman Catholicism, and grant freedom of worship to Protestant Dissenters. But in trying to do this he soon found he was on dangerous ground, and after the failure of the Declaration of Indulgence, in 1673, he was shrewd enough to leave the further carrying out of the plan to his hot-headed and obstinate successor. James II. (1685) had indeed a difficult, if not impossible, task before him. The nation consisted for the most part of Anglicans or Dissenters, and in either capacity was actuated by a fierce and unreasoning hostility to Rome, which had just shown itself in the horrors of the Popish Plot (1678), and the mad excitement of the Exclusion Bill (1680). His only chance of success lay in his ability so to play upon

the loyalty and obedience of the clergy, as gradually to induce them to acquiesce in the government of the Church by a Roman Catholic King, and obtain from time to time important secessions from their body.

Opposition of the Church.—The policy he adopted was the exact opposite. He endeavoured to use the Royal Supremacy as a weight with which to crush the independence of the Church, and to obtain obedience by force instead of by affection. At once the suspicions of the clergy were roused. Compton, Bishop of London (1686), was the first to draw attention to James's plan of dispensing with the Test Act, and appointing Roman Catholics to important posts. The Church took the lead in the struggle, and fought for civil and religious liberty against James, as she had fought four hundred years before against John. It was, however, a difficult thing for the clergy at once to renounce the doctrine of passive obedience. Sancroft, the Primate, obeyed as long as he possibly could, and his seeming submission encouraged the King to persevere. Appointments in the Universities were given to Roman Catholics. The Court of High Commission, declared illegal in Charles II.'s reign, was revived by the King under cover of the royal supremacy, in order to punish the Bishop of London. The Fellows of Magdalen College, Oxford, were ejected (1687) because they would not elect a Roman Catholic President at the King's command. In 1687 James declared all penal laws against both Roman Catholics and Dissenters to be suspended in his Declaration of Indulgence, and in the following year this Declaration was ordered to be read in all churches and chapels.

The Seven Bishops, 1688.—This was more than the bishops and clergy could bear. Their doctrine of passive obedience was not proof against an attempt arbitrarily to repeal Acts of Parliament wholesale, to sweep away by an exercise of the royal power what was thought by all parties to be a great protection of the Church; and to give a perfectly gratuitous insult to the clergy. A petition was presented to the King, signed by Sancroft and six other bishops, refusing to obey his command. The clergy throughout the country, almost to a man, followed the bishops in their disobedience. Indicted before a Middlesex jury for a seditious libel in publishing the petition, they were acquitted amid the frenzied delight of the whole country. Thus the decisive check to the arbitrary rule of James had been given by the Church. The brunt of the conflict had fallen on men like Sancroft and Ken—men who were not only prelates of the Church, but well known as models of saintly life. Loyal as they had always been, bound up with monarchy as the Church had become; when the alternative was put sharply before them of passive obedience to the King, or faithfulness to the liberties of the Church and nation, they never faltered an instant; and men felt in the Revolution that ensued, that, whatever might be the ultimate issue, the first blow against tyranny had been struck by the Church. To the Nonconformists, however, belongs no slight share of praise. James had endeavoured to bribe them by the Declaration of Indulgence (1687) to unite with the Romanists against the Church and liberty; but the attempt was a complete failure. They refused distinctly to purchase advantage to themselves with the

loss of their country's rights. The Revolution was therefore the work of the whole nation. Its fruits were enjoyed mainly by one party.

The Revolution, 1688.—The Tories, among whom must be numbered the majority of the clergy and of the laity of the Church, were fully prepared to overthrow the throne of a despot. They were not prepared to change the dynasty. The whole nation combined to expel James ; but the settlement of the Crown on William and Mary was the work of the Whigs. It was opposed to the theory of divine right held by most Churchmen, and to that of dynastic order held by all Tories. The Church accordingly stood aloof. The nation settled itself without her assistance. The moneyed classes, the merchants, the leading families of the aristocracy, took the matter into their own hands, and carried out the settlement of the Crown, amid the undisguised hostility of a Church pledged to dynastic loyalty. Thus the Church became divorced from the national cause, identified in men's minds with the despotism she had done so much to over-throw, and tossed for many years between the horns of a fatal dilemma ; opposed to the Revolution be-cause it was anti-dynastic, and opposed to Jacobitism because it was Roman Catholic.

The Non-Jurors, 1689.—Six bishops, including Archbishop Sancroft, and about four hundred clergy, found themselves unable to take the oath of allegiance to William and Mary, and being in consequence de-prived of their benefices formed the body known as the Non-Jurors. Their loss was of the utmost consequence to the Church, for although not strong in numbers, they included in their ranks many of the most

learned, the most devout, and most deeply attached of her members. Having bishops among their body, they were enabled to keep up the Episcopal succession, and continued to attract to themselves, during the earlier half of the eighteenth century, the very men whom the Church of England most wanted, in order to maintain strictness of life, earnestness of purpose, attachment to Church principles, and power of self-sacrifice, at a time when luxury, self-seeking, and indifference were her special temptations.

Policy of William III., 1688–1702.—William III. was one of the first sovereigns to whom religious toleration was a definite political principle. In his Declaration, issued on his arrival in England, he stated that he had come to establish a good agreement between the Church of England and the Protestant Dissenters. His own religious sympathies were more with the Dissenters than with the Church, though he was quite prepared to accept Episcopacy as a convenient form of Church government. The High Church party refused to associate themselves with his victory, some of them even resigned their benefices rather than ac-knowledge him. It was natural therefore, that he should look for support to the growing party of Lati-tudinarians, headed by Burnet and Tillotson, and seek to remove the disabilities of Nonconformists to whom he was so largely indebted for his Crown, either by arranging terms on which they might re-enter the Church, or by allowing them free toleration of their religion outside the Church.

The Latitudinarians.—In this policy he had the zealous support of the Latitudinarians, who were men who looked to the practical rather than to the dog-

matic side of Christianity, disbelieved in the divine authority and order of the Church, and in the mystical nature of the Sacraments, and sought for their highest ideal of Christian life in the beneficent discharge of moral duties. They appealed to sober reason as the standard of religion, and naturally came to the front in a prosaic and rational age.

Comprehension and Toleration.—The Government undertook with their help to reorganize the Church. Bills were brought into Parliament (1689) for comprehension between the Church and the Nonconformists, and for toleration of the latter; and a commission was appointed to revise the Prayer-book. None of these measures had been submitted to Convocation. It was intended, if possible, to carry them out by the authority of Parliament alone, without consulting the Church in any way. But the House of Commons was as staunchly opposed to the admission of Nonconformists as Convocation could have been, and threw out the Comprehension Bill at once. The Toleration Act was then passed (1689), which however simply relieved Protestant Dissenters from penalties for holding conventicles, and not attending Church; but did not repeal the Test Act. By this Act the majority of the Nonconformists gained the free exercise of their religion, but William was not content with that. He still hoped that the Church might agree to an alteration of the Prayer-book which the Nonconformists could accept. The revision committee were ordered to prepare a scheme and lay it before Convocation. It contained a surrender to the Nonconformists of the points of ceremonial insisted on by the Bishops at the Conferences at

Hampton Court and the Savoy. It never got so far as Convocation. The clergy clearly would never accept such a surrender, or the laity abide by it if accepted. Politicians reluctantly brought themselves to see that to force comprehension of that sort upon the Church would drive Churchmen into the arms of the Non-Jurors, and reduce the Established Church into a small lifeless body of place-hunters and officials. It was accordingly withdrawn; but as a punishment to the clergy for their zeal, Convocation was not allowed by the King to meet for eleven years. During that time, as bishoprics fell vacant they were given to ecclesiastics who were Whig in politics and Latitudinarian in religion. Tenison, the Primate (1695), during the cessation of Convocation revived the Tudor method of governing the Church by royal injunction. It became a recognised part of the Whig policy to reduce the Church as far as possible to a department of State—to make her a sort of moral policeman on a large scale.

Violence of Party Feeling, 1694–1702.—Such a policy was well calculated to inflame the minds of men who, whether clergy or laity, could not cordially welcome the change of dynasty, and were secretly displeased with themselves for having so easily submitted to the inevitable. During the rest of William's reign party feeling ran very high. The clergy were widely separated from their bishops, the country squires from the Court. When Convocation met (1700) an unseemly quarrel took place between the Upper and Lower House, on the first question that arose which admitted of a quarrel. The accession of Anne (1702) relieved a strain which threatened to

snap the tie which bound Church and State together. She was a Stuart by birth, and a devoted adherent of the Church. She loyally accepted the Revolution. Under her, Tory and Whig, High Churchman and Latitudinarian, might consistently unite.

The Tory Reaction.—But this was not to be. Party feeling became if possible still more embittered. The Tories felt their power, they saw their opportunity. Sure of the support of the Queen, longing to strike a political blow at the Whigs, they revived the old policy of repression. They fought frantically for the privileges of the Church, they confounded her political position and her religious influence. National enthusiasm reached its height in the trial of Dr. Sacheverell in 1710, who had been most unwisely impeached by the Whigs for attacking the Revolution in his sermons. He at once became the champion, and on his conviction the martyr, of the Tory High Church party. The general election (1711) which followed close upon his trial returned a Parliament so uniformly Tory and High Church, that Harley and Bolingbroke were obliged to give them the rein. By the Occasional Conformity Act, passed after many struggles in 1711, the practice, common among Nonconformists, of complying with the provisions of the Test Act, in order merely to qualify for civil appointments, was declared illegal. By the Schism Act, passed in 1714, an attempt was made to prevent the Nonconformists from taking any part in the national education.

Personal Religion under Anne, 1714.—Undoubtedly this enthusiasm was mainly political. It sprung from the long-repressed desire of revenge upon the Whigs, from the fear of an attack upon the Church in

England, similar to that which had prostrated the
Church in Scotland. Swift, and Churchmen like him,
who formed the strength of the party, really valued
the Church much more as a political and Tory organ-
ization than as a religious power. Nevertheless the
contest had its spiritual side. Men, led by political
zeal to espouse violently and romantically the cause of
the Church, often gave themselves up wholly to her
influence, and allowed her to mould their lives with-
out reserve. In the reign of Anne the Church took
the lead in the religious life of the nation. The
Queen herself set the example by a blameless personal
life. The establishment (1704) of Queen Anne's
Bounty for the augmentation of poor benefices, by
the surrender of the first-fruits which Henry VIII.
had annexed to the Crown, attests the reality of her
religion. Daily service was restored in town churches.
Weekly celebrations of Holy Communion became
common. Clerical and devotional meetings were held
for the deepening of spiritual life. Preaching became
less pedantic and more popular. Pictures and music
were more used as aids to devotion. Churches were
better fitted and arranged for the purposes of worship.
In all departments of religion there was a distinct
and real revival, which, however, proved unfortunately
but short-lived. Taking its origin mainly from
political enthusiasm, it soon died away under political
repression.

CHAPTER X.

RELIGION IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.
1714–1800.

Accession of the Hanoverians, 1714.—The accession of the Hanoverians was the final triumph of the Whigs, and the death-blow of the high-flying Toryism of the Queen Anne stamp. George I. was tolerated because he was the only candidate for the Crown that was tolerable. A dynasty which ascended the throne simply for want of a better was a fitting representative of the Whig principle of unsentimental expediency. Sovereigns of slender abilities, coarse manners, low habits of life, and foreign speech, were too uninteresting to inspire enthusiasm, or wake on their own account the slumbering echoes of the old Church and King cry. The sentimental loyalty, half religious, half political, that was so characteristic of Stuart Toryism, faded away in the presence of George I. and his German mistresses. Jacobitism, allied as it was to Roman Catholicism and to France, could not take advantage of the opportunity. The Church, disheartened and discouraged, yielded a grudging obedience to the rule of a dynasty from which she could not escape. She became the prey of Whig intrigue, the willing victim of Court patronage, and gradually sank into listless indifference.

Policy of Walpole, 1720–1742. — The rule of Walpole and the Whig families was marked by a cynical disregard of principle, both religious and political. It was a deliberate system of government by patronage. Bad in all departments of society, a system such as this is seen at its worst when applied to religion. It fosters the increase of place-hunters, and place-hunters are of all men the least capable of appreciating religious responsibilities. Walpole had a special grudge against the Church. The great object of his policy, from first to last, was the firm establishment of the Hanoverians upon the English throne. He could never permit himself to forget that it was from the Church that the Tories learned the most impressive article of their creed, *i.e.*, the theory of divine right; and that the bulk of the clergy, if not Jacobite at heart, were at any rate very far removed from being loyal adherents of the house of Hanover. A more sympathetic minister would have tried to win the Church back to the Crown, and enlist the ebbing doctrine of divine right on the side of the Parliamentary King. Walpole determined on a policy of strangulation. His efforts were directed to destroy what remained of independence in the Church, and to check her further development, so that by reducing her entirely under the control of the Government he might have her revenues at his disposal for the reward of his supporters, and her influence at his command for the maintenance of order. He almost uniformly appointed to bishoprics men who were Latitudinarians in doctrine, courtiers by profession, and politicians at heart. Advantage was taken of the excitement caused by the publication of a book by Bishop Hoadly, of Bangor (1717),

which was in principle Nonconformist, to put an end
to the meetings of Convocation altogether. Thus the
clergy were prevented from being able to express their
opinion in a corporate manner on any question relating
to religion. This measure naturally gave the initiative
in ecclesiastical legislation and threw much of ecclesias-
tical administration, into the hands of Parliament, as
the only effective authority left. Walpole did not
hesitate even to procure the deprivation of his great
enemy, Atterbury, by an Act of Parliament in 1722—an
act of high-handed prerogative not easily to be matched
even in Tudor times. He steadily refused to allow any
organization of the Church in the Colonies, which were
now growing so important a part of English dominion,
and even managed to evade instructions given by
Parliament and assented to by the King, for the pay-
ment of money for that object.

Abuses in the Church.—Policy such as this, designed
to bind the Church in gilded chains, to give her pre-
eminence and dignity, wealth and position; but
careful to check all efforts of life or development of
work, brought fatal consequences to her and to reli-
gion. Abuses made their appearance, similar in
character to those which abounded on the eve of
the Reformation. Politicians were rewarded for poli-
tical service by Church preferment. Bishops accumu-
lated offices and benefices, and attended to none.
Hoadly never set foot in his diocese for six years.
Watson, of Llandaff, is said to have held no less than
sixteen benefices, of which only nine had a resident
curate; while he himself lived in the Lake district,
and became a farmer. Younger sons of the nobility
received important posts at an early age. The aristo-

cratical spirit in some of its worst aspects had again seized upon religion. At a time when population and wealth were increasing rapidly, when England was winning an empire abroad, and finding there an outlet for the enthusiasm, the patriotism, and the perseverance of her sons, the national Church was withering and shrinking, lowering her conception of responsibility, becoming the property of a few. Non-residence was not only practised, but defended. The pew system was extended to country churches, and the position of the poor made more dependent and uncomfortable. Chapels of ease were erected, to meet the demands of the increasing population, which, built for the most part as a speculation, pew rented, and fashionable, increased the growing alienation of the poor. The law as expounded in the Ecclesiastical Courts leant strongly in favour of what may be called the proprietary idea in all Church affairs. The advowson was looked upon as the property of the patron, the church and churchyard of the incumbent, the chancel of the rector. Even the post of parish clerk, or lay clerk in a cathedral choir, was often declared to be a freehold office. The idea of trust was almost wholly merged in that of property; and what was always intended to be a trust to be exercised on behalf of the Church, became a right of property in the hands of the owner. Unfortunately, just as this serious misconception of the nature of rights connected with the Church was growing up in the law courts, it began to be the custom to preserve and print reports of decided cases, which became precedents, binding upon future judges. In this way the proprietary idea took firm hold of the minds of the lawyers, and became the recognised prin-

ciple of their decisions. The clergy willingly acquiesced
in it. Nothing has done more than this to cramp the
energies of the Church, to check its reformation, to
lead to practical abuses of the gravest character, even
in our own day. In the eighteenth century it almost
destroyed the sense of responsibility. Responsibility
for the souls of the nation was no longer an active
principle in the minds of the clergy. Their calling
represented to them privilege rather than duty. To
be happy themselves, and to help others to be happy,
by the example of an honourable simple domestic life,
was their highest ideal. It was an ideal not without
its value in a coarse and business-like age. It did
much to preserve the sober standard of life and
thought, which enabled England to withstand so easily
the shocks of the French Revolution. It prepared the
ground for the enthusiastic energy of the Methodists,
and the deeper earnestness of the Tractarians ; but
it had the fatal fault of taking a low standard of
religious duty as the normal one. Contenting herself
with dirty churches, sleepy services, infrequent com-
munions, essay-like sermons ; acquiescing in the reign
of patronage and privilege, the Church forgot that her
first duty was to preach the gospel to the nation ;
and was satisfied with finding an outlet for her zeal
in political and theological controversy.

The Deist Controversy, 1696–1754.—The most
valuable work done for religion in England in the
eighteenth century was, undoubtedly, the defence of
the Christian faith against the Deists, followed by the
Methodist revival of personal religion. The Latitu-
dinarian party in the Church, which rose to power
after the Revolution, looked to reason rather than to

authority as the foundation of religion. Some of them, pushing this principle to an extreme, refused to believe what they could not understand, and were led on by their dislike of anything mysterious, to question the authority of Scripture, doubt the doctrine of the Atonement, and deny that of the Trinity. The founders of Methodism (1739), finding the Church sleepy and indifferent, and personal religion almost choked to death, revived that enthusiasm which it had been the special object of the Latitudinarians to kill, and made men once again live good lives through the power of a direct appeal to their hearts rather than to their heads. The Latitudinarians were essentially critical and intellectual, the Wesleyans emotional and practical. The former produced the Deists and the Unitarians, the latter the Methodist Dissenters.

Tenets of the Deists.—It is difficult to state accurately what the teaching of the Deists was. They were critical, not constructive. They sought to destroy, not to create. They carefully avoided forming themselves into a recognised school. Each of them fought an independent battle of his own; but all laid stress upon natural religion as a better and more trustworthy revelation of God than Scripture. They appealed from what they considered the false Christianity of the Bible and the Church, to a truer religion of which Reason alone was to be the judge, and which was in fact to contain only so much of historical Christianity as each individual reasoner thought he could understand, and was willing to believe. Shaftesbury — in his *Characteristics* published in 1714 after his death—politely but contemptuously laughed at the Gospel narrative; himself the foremost of con-

formists and the supporter of the Test Act. Toland (1696), and Collins (1713), attacked the idea that there could be any mystery in religion. Tindal (1730) summed up the matter by insisting that the law of nature is the only perfect law, the only complete revelation of God, while that of Scripture was secondary and imperfect. Bishop Butler, in his celebrated *Analogy of Religion*, published in 1736, refuted Tindal by shewing that the law of nature itself is just as imperfect a revelation as that of Scripture, and cannot therefore be preferred to or substituted for it. Bishop Berkeley, in his *Alciphron*, most cleverly, but with doubtful candour, developed the tentative statements of the Deist criticism into what he maintained was their inevitable outcome—atheism and vice. Warburton, in his *Divine Legation* (1750), with stupendous learning, and at more stupendous length, proved the divine foundation of the Jewish religion and society. Partly owing to the conclusiveness of these replies, but partly owing to the fact that the Deists came to be looked upon as troublers of society, the controversy collapsed about the middle of the century, leaving but few traces behind it.

The Trinitarian Controversy, 1713–1782.—It was far otherwise with the Trinitarian dispute, which followed close upon its heels. It is at first somewhat strange to find the controversies of the fourth century reproducing themselves in the eighteenth, and to see a second Arius in wig and bands. In reality, the doctrine of the equal Godhead of the Three Persons of the Trinity is one which always has and always will meet with critics in an age in which criticism of the mysterious is keen, and the rule of reason paramount

over that of faith. Socinus, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, had revived Arianism in Poland, and began a controversy which called forth the great work of Bishop Bull in defence of the Nicene Creed. In England Socinianism had been taught openly by Biddle at Gloucester during the Commonwealth, and had gained ground secretly. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the controversy broke out. Whiston a Cambridge professor (1713), denied the equality of the Father and the Son. Dr. Clarke (1712), a well-known theologian, and the adviser of the Queen, maintained the same doctrine, but stated it in a more guarded way. It spread much much more quickly among the Nonconformists than in the Church. Waterland (1719), by a merciless logic, placed Clarke on the horns of the dilemma of Unitarianism or Tritheism, neither of which he would accept. The Nonconformists did not feel the difficulty. Unitarian teaching had for some time been growing steadily among them, and when it was desired at the Salters' Hall Controversy in 1719, to check this by imposing a test of orthodoxy, the result was a schism. Presbyterians and Baptists, in their objections to the imposition of any test whatever, left themselves open to the secret advances of Unitarianism. By the middle of the century things had progressed so fast that the Presbyterians hardly existed as an independent body in England, while the Unitarians were organized into a separate denomination, and had produced several men of considerable mark, such as Lardner, Dr. Watts, and Dr. Priestley. In 1813 they obtained toleration from the government.

The Unitarians, 1813.—It is not in England that

the real successes of the Unitarians have been won. They number at the present day but some two hundred congregations, and they are not increasing. In America, on the contrary, there are over three thousand congregations. They have produced men of the greatest eminence, such as Channing and Emerson, and have succeeded in making their religion attractive. In England they have gathered together but a limited circle of coldly intellectual men. The supremacy of the reason, the limitation of religion by reason, are still the principles of Unitarianism. It has, nevertheless, supplied a resting-place for some men of warm sympathy as well as critical temperament, such as James Martineau and Blanco White. It has brought into prominence a philosophical view of religious action, which is a useful corrective in days of much enthusiasm and intense human interest; but its power is essentially that of an intellectual philosophy, not of a living religion. By eliminating from its system the divine love and the human sympathy brought into the world by the Incarnation, and continued in the Church by the Sacraments, it has deprived itself of the secret of vitality, and reduced religion to a system of morality which may command the assent, but can never win the devotion, of mankind.

The Wesleys, 1730–1784.—To say that Unitarianism and Methodism sprang from the same source seems a paradox, but is nevertheless true. The supremacy of reason, pushed to its extreme, produced Unitarianism, the reaction against it Methodism. By the middle of the eighteenth century, the Church stagnant and obstructive, society false and corrupt, were reaping *the fruits of* Walpole's fatal policy. The Nonconformist

bodies were affected by the prevailing torpor. The dying echoes of the Trinitarian controversy alone sounded fitfully in the ears of the slumbering hosts. It needed a sharper blast to make the dry bones live. John and Charles Wesley, and George Whitefield, were members of a religious society in Oxford (1730) which, based upon the model of the old societies of Anne's days, bound its members to live a devout, self-denying life, according to rule. Methodism was this society extended all over England, and took its name from the rule or method adopted. John Wesley, as has been well said, was a man who passed through many convictions. He began life as a High Church-man of a rather precise complexion. A few years later, falling in with the Moravians, he imbibed their doctrine of sensible conversion; and having, as he thought, passed through that experience himself, taught to others its necessity as the entrance to the way of salvation. In company with Whitefield he then learned to look upon the phenomena of religious hysteria as the direct evidence of such conversion; but to the end of his life he retained a firm grasp on the Sacramental system, and professed a loyal affection to the Church. His intention undoubtedly was to reform the Church from within, by means of his Society; but in him the instincts of an evangelist were far stronger than his grasp of the principles of Church order. Circumstances tended to make it very difficult for him to avoid forming a separate religious body. His followers, enthusiastic and ardent, valued the society to which they owed their conversion far above the Church, of which it professed to form part. Whitefield early embraced Calvinistic

doctrine, and though the Wesleys parted from him on that account, yet still in the minds of most men they were labouring in the same cause. Lady Huntingdon claimed as a peeress the right to nominate any number of chaplains that she chose, and so practically withdrew from episcopal control a considerable number of Whitefield's preachers. When her claim was declared to have no foundation in law many of her chaplains joined the Independents and Baptists, while others seceded from the Church with their congregations.

The Society and Dissent.—From the first there was a continual leakage from the Society into the ranks of Dissent. It is said that the majority of Wesley's first body of travelling preachers became Dissenters, and, strongly as Wesley himself protested against it, he must have seen that secession was inevitable. The Society was in reality a religious order. Like the Friars in the thirteenth century, or the Jesuits in the sixteenth, it could only be successfully enlisted under the banner of the Church by a strong appeal to the principle of chivalrous obedience. Wesley himself was too ardent in temperament, too ill-regulated in mind, to become the general of an order. The Church was far too anomalous and abstract a body to command that sort of obedience. It was impossible to swear enthusiastic devotion to Archbishop Potter, or to George II., and so matters drifted. Wesley felt that the tide was too strong for him. When he consented to his preaching-chapels being registered as Nonconformist meeting-houses; when, in 1784 he placed the government of his Society in the hands of the Methodist Conference; above all, when he set apart by a form of consecration two episcopal superin-

tendents of the Society in America, he was practically rendering the separation from the Church inevitable. After his death it soon came, and brought with it considerable internal disunion. In 1795 preachers were authorised to administer the Lord's Supper, by which, of course, they at once became a Dissenting body. In 1797 the Methodist New Connection was formed. In 1810 the Primitive Methodists seceded. Since then there have been further divisions of minor importance, and at the present day nineteen different forms of Methodism are registered.

Influence of Methodism.—Of all the Nonconformist bodies Methodism has had the greatest effect upon the religious life of the nation, while in America it has spread even more rapidly than in England. It is calculated that it numbers in all fully fifteen million souls. The religion of a considerable part of the peasantry in England, even though they belong to the Church, is largely tinctured with Methodism. The simplicity and homeliness of the Primitive Methodists is especially attractive, and their chapels are found all over the country districts of England. Where the church is not free, or the services or preaching are dull, many Church-people attend the services of both indiscriminately. With the exception of the Welsh Calvinistic Methodists, there is little that is political in Methodism. It has grown up chiefly through the inertness of the Church. It flourishes mostly where the Church is least effective, and though far removed from the teaching or principles of Wesley, it is still nearer to the Church than any other form of Nonconformity ; and efforts, not wholly unsuccessful, have been made in recent times to draw the two nearer together.

THE EVANGELICAL REVIVAL AND THE OXFORD MOVEMENT. 1780–1884.

The Evangelical Party, 1781–1833.—The revival in religion, of which the Methodist movement was the most striking feature, led to the formation of a party within the Church—in sympathy with Methodism, yet differing from it in many important respects—which is generally known by the name of Evangelical. It owed much in its origin to Wesley and Whitefield. Many of the earlier Evangelicals, such as Harvey, Berridge, and Venn, were their friends and disciples; but as the Methodists became more and more organized as a party outside the Church, the Evangelicals on their side became more and more organized as a party inside the Church. They were steady upholders of Church order and of the parochial system. They disapproved of Wesley's travelling preachers, and of field missions. They refused to accept the thorough-going Calvinism of Wesley's successors. They were just as essentially parish priests as Wesley's followers were mission-preachers. Their earnestness and vigour brought with it the unpopularity which usually attends uncompromising religion. The leading Evangelical clergy worked on for years in large towns and

country parishes unnoticed and unrewarded ; but among them were found those who, by their intense piety, bright faith, and simple life, brought back to society the sense of religious duty and personal responsibility.

The Defects of the Evangelical Movement.—The Evangelical movement was confessedly incomplete. It touched but one side of human nature. It left unexplored vast regions of Christian thought and practice. It centred religion upon a few vital truths. The unworthiness of man, the all-sufficient sacrifice of Christ, form the kernel of its teaching. It magnified the Atonement at the expense of the Incarnation, and accordingly left out of sight the whole conception of the Church as a divine society—the repository and guardian of the Sacramental life. It had a distinct tendency to stiffen into a school, to form a sort of sect within the Church, under the rule of leaders not the less autocratic because they were numerous, or infallible because they were Protestants. It failed as an intellectual movement. It produced no theologian even of the second rank. With the exception of Cowper (1800) it produced no writer whose works were extensively read in ordinary society. The Evangelical leaders, feeling that their strength lay in practical pastoral work, were apt to despise intellectual things too much. Their devotional writings met with a success and gained an influence second only to those of Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress,* or William Law's *Serious Call ;* but they showed a re- markable disinclination to grapple with the intellectual problems of the day. From the time when the Church was mainly under their influence, the separa- tion between religion and learning, which is so serious

a characteristic of the earlier part of the nineteenth century, may be dated—a separation which the deeper learning and freer sympathy of our own day has only been able partially to heal.

Merits of the Evangelical Movement.—It is in personal religion, in its influence over life and character, that the Evangelical movement is seen at its best and strongest. It taught personal holiness by insisting on the personal debt of man to God. It taught humanity by insisting on the common brotherhood of fallen human nature. It revived the sense of the personal responsibility of one man for another. In this it was a great and enduring protest against the cynicism and the selfishness of eighteenth century life. Its greatest leaders—Fletcher of Madeley, Venn, Newton, Simeon, Wilberforce, Hannah More—yield in personal sanctity to none whom the Church delights to honour. The institution of Sunday-schools by Raikes in 1781, and the foundation of the Church Missionary Society (1799), point to the realization of the feeling of duty towards others. The Abolition of Slavery (1807) shews the first triumph of the principle of humanity in the political world, and the awakening of the national conscience to the existence of a national sin. It was the forerunner of the Factory legislation of later times, a rebellion against the tyranny of Utilitarianism, most valuable to the cause of religion in a specially utilitarian age.

Need for Church Organization.—The Evangelical movement, appealing as it did to but one side of human nature, the devotional, to the exclusion of the artistic and the intellectual, and forgetting in its appeal that the way to the heart lies quite as much

through the eye as through the ear, was unable to effect that complete reformation which the Church of England so imperatively required. It increased personal piety, it did not re-awaken Church life. Looking at the Church merely as one among many Protestant Churches, entirely oblivious to her claims to inherit a continuous life from Apostolic times, it was not likely that the Evangelical leaders would attach much importance to the effectiveness and purity of her organization, the stateliness of her worship, the independence of her authority. But these were points which every year was bringing into greater prominence. The suppression of Convocation (1717) had thrown of necessity Church administration into the hands of Parliament. The growth of constitutional government had completely altered the character of the royal supremacy. That supremacy was exercised no longer by a sovereign anointed by the Church, a son of the Church, bound by the most direct and solemn ties to the Church, but by the mouthpiece of a Parliamentary majority, a political chief whose responsibilities were primarily to his party. Parliament was no longer an assembly of Churchmen. Roman Catholics were admitted to the franchise in 1829. Nonconformists were relieved of civil disabilities in 1828. Jews were admitted to Parliament in 1858. It was clear that Church-rates could not be maintained much longer. At the same time population was increasing enormously. The claims upon the Church were growing at a rate far exceeding her resources. She must plainly adapt herself to the new state of things if she was to keep her influence and do her duty. The old days of patronage and

dignity were passing away under the solvent of democracy, and the Church like every other institution, would have to justify her existence by the work she was able to do. Just at the moment when these new claims upon her energies were becoming imperative, the supports she had hitherto received from the State were being removed; but the chains woven by lawyers and politicians around her limbs were riveted the tighter. She could not make a bishop, she could not build a church, she could not hold a synod, she could not even discuss a question, without the permission of the State which was but grudgingly given. It was plain to every thinking man, that if she was to be equal to the demands made upon her she must regain independence of action. She must employ new and more interesting methods of work.

The Tractarian Movement, 1833—Never was religion in England so uninteresting as it was in the earlier part of the nineteenth century. Never was a time when thought was so active, criticism so keen, taste so fastidious; and which so plainly demanded a religion intellectual, sympathetic, and attractive. This want the Tractarian, or Oxford movement as it is called, attempted to supply. That it has made the Church of England interesting is on all sides allowed. That it made her intellectual, few who know the works of Dr. Newman, Dr. Pusey, and Dr. Mozley would deny; while the power of sympathy it was able to call forth is abundantly attested by the characters of such men as Mr. Keble, Mr. Isaac Williams, and Mr. Lowder. But the Tractarians put before themselves an aim far higher than that. They attempted nothing less than to develope and place on a firm and

imperishable basis what Laud and the Non-Jurors had tried tentatively to do; namely, to vindicate the Church of England from all complicity with foreign Protestantism, to establish her essential identity with the Church of the Apostles and Fathers through the mediæval Church, and to place her for the first time since the Reformation in her true position with regard to the Church in the East and the West; as part of the Church Catholic equally with them, teaching the same faith, exercising the same discipline, rendering the same worship as the primitive and undivided Church; having introduced into her system only such alterations as the independent history and circumstances of any part of the Church may fairly warrant.

The Tracts for the Times, 1833–1845.—Naturally the first work undertaken was the explanation of doctrine. The *Tracts for the Times,* mainly written by Dr. Newman and Dr. Pusey, put before men what the writers believed to be the doctrine of the Church of England, with a boldness and precision of statement hitherto unexampled. The divine authority of the Church. Her essential unity in all parts of the world. The effectiveness of regeneration in Holy Baptism. The reality of the presence of our Lord in Holy Communion. The sacrificial character of Holy Communion. The reality of the power to absolve sin committed by our Lord to the priesthood. Such were the doctrines maintained in the Tractarian writings. They had been held by thousands in the Church of England ever since the Reformation, but had never before been stated so comprehensively and unambiguously as a system of doctrine, or claimed so

uncompromisingly as the true and only legitimate teaching of the Church.

Opposition of Evangelicals and Latitudinarians.— They were, of course, directly opposed to the popular Protestantism of the day, as held by the Evangelical party. They were equally opposed to the Latitudinarianism of the Broad Church party, who—true descendants of Tillotson and Burnet — were under the leadership of men like Arnold and Stanley, endeavouring to unite all men against the wickedness of the time on the basis of a common Christian morality under the guardianship of the State, unhampered by distinctive creeds or definite doctrines. No two methods could be more opposite. The Tractarians sought to revive religion through the intrinsic power of truth, expressed in creeds and doctrines. The Broad Church party through Christian life based upon reason, and unfettered by creed or doctrine. Accordingly the Latitudinarian combined with the Evangelical against the Sacerdotalist; and Dr. Newman, obliged to leave Oxford, unable to stand the strain of a conflict with his ecclesiastical superiors, became a Roman Catholic in 1845, and took with him many of the ablest and most devoted of his followers.

Tractarianism becomes Popular, 1845–1860.—A loss so severe, so irremediable, seemed to give the death-blow to the Tractarian movement. In reality it extended its work to a wider area. Ceasing to be mainly intellectual and academical, it went forth from Oxford into the streets and alleys of the great towns. Clergy put into practice in active parochial work, the doctrines Dr. Pusey and Mr. Keble had taught them at Oxford. Dr. Hook at Leeds,

Mr. Liddell at Knightsbridge, showed how firm a hold upon the hearts and allegiance of the people Tractarianism could have; and practical men began to recognise it as a real power in their midst. The war of controversy which was ever raging, brought into more distinct prominence every day the authority which the Prayer-book and English theology gave to the Tractarian teaching. It appealed to the growing artistic tastes of Englishmen, as well as to their historical instincts and devotional nature. Music, painting, architecture, needlework, the decorative arts, were all impressed into the service of the Church. Antiquarian and historical learning were brought to bear upon ecclesiastical antiquities, and justified their revival or retention. Churches were everywhere built richer and lovelier than of old, on the model of the mediæval buildings. Cathedrals and parish churches were restored in exact imitation of their original features. They became again primarily places of worship and not preaching - houses. The services became bright, elaborate, attractive in themselves, and not merely devotional preludes to the sermon.

Development of Ritual, 1860–1882.—Then came a further development. As men grasped high Sacramental doctrine more and more, they sought more and more to make the celebration of Holy Communion the great and central act of worship, and to surround it with every accessory of dignity and beauty which could fairly be attained. In many places the use of the Eucharistic vestments—which seemed to be authorized by the Ornaments Rubric at the beginning of the Prayer-book, but which had probably never been used since the reign of Elizabeth—was restored.

But the feelings which prompted High Churchmen to enrich their Altars and services seemed to Low Churchmen to be superstitious, and the doctrines expressed by the use of vestments to be indistinguishable from Popery.

The Vestments Controversy.—An association was formed among the more zealous of the Evangelical party to test the legality of these ritual alterations. A protracted litigation ensued which embraced many points of ceremonial, some important and some exceedingly trivial. The chief point at issue was the use of the vestments. After having been declared lawful by the ecclesiastical judge, and impliedly treated as lawful by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council—which had been made the final court of appeal in ecclesiastical cases by Parliament in 1833—they were twice by the same court declared to be unlawful, but each time on different grounds, and on grounds which, when made public, gave rise to a good deal of damaging criticism. It was thought by many that the decisions were given from motives of policy rather than on principles of law.

Resistance to the Parliamentary Courts.—Attention was turned by this from the decisions which had been given to the character of the court which had given them. Men asked themselves if it was any part of the Reformation settlement that Parliament should have the power of imposing upon the Church without her consent, a court which should finally decide upon her doctrine, worship, and discipline. A struggle was thus threatening between Church and State; and in 1874 Parliament passed an Act for the Regulation of Public Worship, by which it hoped to quell the

rising spirit of insubordination. The exact reverse was the result. The attempt to put down the Ritualists, as they were called, by force only proved their strength. Clergy who were prosecuted for ceremonial felt more than ever justified in refusing obedience to action on the part of Parliament, which seemed plainly unconstitutional to all who were not prepared to admit that Parliament was the proper authority to decide the doctrine and ritual of the English Church. When it was found that clergy were prepared to go to prison rather than acknowledge the supremacy of Parliament in spiritual matters, it was felt that the policy of repression had failed. A truce between the opposing parties was declared by the Archbishop of Canterbury (Tait) in 1881, by moving for a Royal Commission to examine into the constitution and working of the ecclesiastical courts. The bishops, on whom the responsibility lies of permitting fresh litigation, have since that time uniformly discouraged it; and it seems probable that if any attempt to end the present anomalous state of grudging toleration is now successfully made, it will be in the direction of the increased liberty and independence of the Church.

Revival in Personal Religion, 1833–1884.—The Oxford movement has brought with it no less striking a revival in personal religion than in doctrine and worship. The sense of personal responsibility has widened into a sense of corporate responsibility, and has led to a deeper self-denial. The community life has been revived for men and women, which seeks to combine devotional retirement with practical beneficence. Sisterhoods, such as those of Clewer, Wantage, and Kilburn, have been enabled by their numbers

and organization, to undertake and carry on works of mercy in a way which no parochial machinery, however complete, could do. Theological colleges for the spiritual and intellectual training of the clergy, have been founded in most dioceses, and discharge the double duty of increasing the general tone of earnestness, and assisting in the intellectual training of those who have been unable to go to a university. Missions in country parishes and towns for the awakening of slumbering religious life ; retreats and quiet days for deepening religion in both clergy and laity, are yearly increasing in number. Special seasons, such as Ascension Day, Lent, Holy Week, and Good Friday, are much more observed. Congregations are larger and far more reverent in demeanour. Celebrations of Holy Communion much more frequent and better attended. No well-worked parish is without its guilds for men and women, and its classes for communicants. Great efforts are made that preparation for Confirmation should be a reality. Nor have the claims of the Colonies and of the heathen upon the Church been forgotten. New colonial dioceses are formed nearly every year. Missions are sent out and maintained even in countries such as Central Africa, where but few Europeans can live without permanent injury to their health. But perhaps the most striking result of the Oxford movement is the attempt which has been successfully though at present only tentatively made, to win back the poorest and roughest of the population of our great cities to the Church, by the machinery of a thorough parish organization, elaborate ceremonial, and distinctive Sacramental teaching. The congregations of such churches as S.

Alban's Holborn, and S. Peter's London Docks, placed side by side with those of S. Paul's Cathedral, and All Saints' Margaret Street, have shown that the Oxford movement in its latest development, can adapt itself equally to the intellectual refinement of the educated, and the emotional simplicity of the poorest of the poor.

The tendency of modern life is more and more to judge by results. It is mainly owing to the devoted self-denying hard work of the Ritualistic clergy in the large towns, that society has agreed to discourage their prosecution. It is the hard work of the clergy all over the country that has called forth the admiration and won the sympathy and support of the laity. That it should have been able to produce and to develope so universal a power of energetic work is perhaps the greatest testimony to the value and the importance of the Oxford movement.

Religious Tendencies of the Age.—It is impossible for anyone to survey the religious condition of England in the nineteenth century without being struck with two things : One, the great religious energy which displays itself in every department of life, both within the pale of the Church and outside it. The other, the equally remarkable loosening of traditional religious ties. Each man thinks for himself, decides for himself, acts for himself in religious matters, with very little regard to tradition or association.

(1) *Society Earnest and Democratical.*—England is in fact democratical in religion as she is in politics, and religion has accordingly to deal with each man personally, to win his own individual heart, instead of contenting itself with laying down certain rules and

putting before mankind a certain standard for all to follow. Society has therefore become divided much more sharply than it used to be on the subject of religion. Most thoughtful people are in earnest, and take one side or the other strongly. Religious people are more earnestly religious, irreligious people more earnestly irreligious. The proportion of men who make the existence of religious differences an excuse for ridding themselves of religious restraint is comparatively small. The standard of duty among all classes of the community is unquestionably high.

(2) *Importance of Science and Criticism.*—At the same time, much of this loosening of religious ties is due to other causes than the spread of a spirit of democracy. The great increase in scientific knowledge, especially in astronomy, geology, and biology, has brought about a re-statement of the relations between God and man, which has been to some minds unsettling. Biblical criticism, far more exact and comprehensive than of old, has considerably modified traditional views as to the nature of the authority and inspiration of Scripture. Philosophical thought, destructive and utilitarian, has landed some in an agnosticism from which they can neither advance nor retire. The age is changing rapidly. The field of knowledge is daily widening; and religion, which undertakes to sum up all knowledge, must in the very nature of things vary in its mode of expressing truth. It is not to be wondered at if some lose their foothold in so shifting a sea, and are borne to and fro by the waters.

Difficulties in the Way of Religion.—The problem religion has to face in the nineteenth century is therefore a delicate and complicated one. It has to deal

with intellectual criticism—subtle, varied, deep, but eminently fair—requiring individual and thorough study of each separate line of argument, necessitating a partial reconstruction of theology. It has to deal with indifference, partly fashionable, resulting from a laziness of mind which refuses to face uncomfortable questions; partly stolid, springing from the weariness and pressure of modern life. It has to deal with vice and atheism, often coarse and ignorant, mainly the outcome of over population and the heritage of past neglect.

Loss of State Support.—In the struggle the Church has been deprived gradually of such support as the State used either to give or to guarantee. The State no longer considers it to be any part of its functions to assist people to be Christians. It is enough if it does not stand in the way of people being Christians if they wish it. Parliament is open to all except conscientious atheists. Elementary education need not include any religious instruction at all. The colleges of our universities are only obliged, since the University Commission of 1877, to have a religious establishment sufficient to perform daily service in their chapels. It is noticed that among public bodies there is an increasing disinclination to provide any religious assistance out of the public funds. Everywhere the tendency is plain to look upon religion as entirely a personal matter for each man to settle with his conscience, but with which the State has nothing at all to do. Religion is thus thrown upon its own resources, and has to face the problem by itself.

Development of Church Organization.—In answer to the call thus made mainly upon her to meet the

intellectual doubt, the wearied indifference, the neglected heathenism of the day, the Church has boldly appealed to her own resources, and sought to meet each separate claim as it arose by a further and more perfect development of her organic life. She puts herself before mankind as the great religious society commissioned to deal with such matters.

(1) *Education.*—As education, both higher and elementary, has been taken out of her exclusive control, she has had recourse to voluntary effort. Her schools still succeed in giving a better education at a less cost than that paid for by public taxation. The Church training colleges for schoolmasters and mistresses, teach by far the larger proportion of the teachers. The schools founded for the upper and middle classes by Canon Woodard, give a good public-school education, while at the two chief universities Keble and Selwyn colleges afford an efficient university education, to her sons under her own auspices. In order to deal with the deeper intellectual and spiritual problems of the day in a more special manner, an institution has lately been founded in Oxford in memory of Dr. Pusey. In this way a system of education, by means of which the clergy of the Church may become more learned, and the laity more attached, has grown up to supplement existing agencies. As the Church has bit by bit been shorn of her ancient endowments, and deprived of her educational monopoly, she has thrown herself more unreservedly upon the affection of her members, and tried in some measure to recover by their voluntary efforts what she has lost through the action of the State, if not justly forfeited *by her own* shortcomings.

(2) *Synods and Conferences.*—The revival of Convocation in the year 1850, marks a great step towards the perfecting of Church organization. It was quickly followed by the establishment of Diocesan Synods or Conferences in nearly every diocese, which have done much to form and enlighten public opinion on subjects which affect the interests of religion. In the last few years, by the formation of the Central Council of Diocesan Conferences, an attempt has been made to make the principle of representation more effective in ecclesiastical matters. If, as seems possible, that principle receives a further development by the establishment of a House of Laymen in connection with Convocation, the Church will be provided with a body adequately representing all shades of opinion both clerical and lay; and able if necessary to succeed to some of the functions of government in the case of disestablishment.

(3) *Increase of the Episcopate.*—The Church has been no less zealous in the increase of her executive than in the improvement of her constitutional machinery. The movement for the increase of the Episcopate, both at home and abroad, has been of the utmost importance. It is not too much to say that it has altered the whole position of the Anglican Church. No longer confined to one small island, and ruled by some forty prelates, she is now spread over the whole surface of the globe as an organized society, presided over by no less than two hundred bishops, and including within her ample pale daughter Churches self-governing, independent, completely organized, yet strictly preserving towards her due relations of filial affection. A bishop is no longer merely a highly-

dignified official with a seat in the House of Lords. He is the centre and soul of all religious work in his diocese. In England alone five new Sees have been formed and endowed by voluntary effort during the last ten years. Abroad the stain which so long rested upon England of being the only Christian nation which, believing in the virtues deprived its Colonies of the privileges, of Episcopacy, has been wiped away. For many years English politicians refused to allow any Sees to be founded in the colonies or dependencies of England. The American plantations could not obtain an Episcopate until they had won their independence. Even then it was thought prudent that the first American bishop should be consecrated in Scotland rather than in England (1784). India was without a bishop until 1814. But during the last fifty years a great change has been manifest. Rarely does a year pass without the formation of a new See, and at the last Lambeth Conference in 1878, one hundred bishops of the Anglican Communion gathered around the Archbishop of Canterbury as their spiritual chief.

(4) *Foreign Missions.*—Closely connected with the increase of the colonial Episcopate is the question of the effectiveness of missions to the heathen. It cannot be denied that as yet England is but imperfectly alive to the responsibilities thrown upon her by the fact, that more than any other Christian nation, she has conquered heathen countries and corrupted heathen society. The sum raised by the Church and the Nonconformists for missionary purposes is undoubtedly large ; but it is not large when tried by the *standard of duty* and extent of responsibility, and a

great deal of it is wasted. Still, here as elsewhere, an improvement is visible. Missionaries are now better trained for their work, by the establishment of missionary colleges at S. Augustine's, Canterbury, and elsewhere. The increasing number of special missions, unconnected with the great societies, evince awakened interest; while a nation which can produce for mission work such men as Bishop Patteson, Bishop Steere, and Dr. Duff, cannot be said to be blind to the duties of evangelization.

(5) *Formation of New Parishes.*—Equally important in its religious results, has been the attempt to extend the ordinary parochial machinery, so as to touch the dense masses of population in our large towns. It had been for many years obvious that the funds of Queen Anne's Bounty were totally inadequate to enable the Church to keep pace with the advancing tide of population. At the same time that the needs of town parishes were so pressing, many bishoprics and cathedral chapters were unduly wealthy. What was wanted was a readjustment of revenue. By the appointment of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1836, with power to apply the surplus income of bishoprics and chapters to the endowment of new parishes in populous places, and the assistance of local efforts at parochial development; the Church has been enabled, not only to keep pace with the growth of population, but in some places to recover lost ground, and everywhere to evoke generous and hearty support from the laity. More has been done in the way of church building and church endowment during the last fifty years than in the rest of the three hundred which have elapsed since the Reforma-

tion. These efforts have been supplemented by attempts, no less sincere if somewhat less effective, to provide adequate organization for parishes thus formed. The Additional Curates' Society, and the Church Pastoral Aid Society, seek to provide needy and populous parishes with curates. Many public schools and some colleges, have undertaken in recent years to support mission clergy in destitute districts; and the universities are now endeavouring to found and maintain houses in East London and elsewhere, which may form centres of religious and social work amongst the outcast and the poor.

Summary, 1884.—Thus in whatever quarter we look we see the same signs of active and vigorous religion. It shews itself in the Church of England, in the development of organization, in the awakening of the spirit of liberty, in the effectiveness of missions both at home and abroad, in the severity of intellectual and moral training, in the earnestness and depth of spiritual life. It has shewn itself among Roman Catholics, by the success which has attended their efforts at conversion, by their own increased zeal and devotion. It has shewn itself among the Protestant Nonconformists, by their self-sacrifice in missionary work, by the large funds they raise by voluntary gifts for religious purposes, by their union and discipline as a political power. It is more obvious in the Church than elsewhere. She is seen impatiently to discard traditional ties, and boldly to throw herself upon the people. Just when Nonconformity is in danger of becoming exclusive and political, just *when* society is in danger of becoming slothfully *indifferent,* or fashionably sceptical, the Church is

seeking to become popular, and to strike fresh roots into the democracy of the day. She seeks to win the hearts of her people by the simple means of an ardent love for humanity, and devoted work for their welfare. On the success of this effort—to combine the traditions, the thought, and the experience of the past with the fierce needs and impatient demands of the present—depend mainly the influence of religion, the existence of morality, the maintenance of social order in England. But it is not enough that religion should be merely influential. She must be supreme—supreme over the mind and over the heart of mankind; and she can only assert and maintain that supremacy by being in the front of the intellectual as well as the humanitarian movements of the time; by taking the lead in thought as well as in action. We have seen the Church national before the Conquest, papal during the Middle Ages, monarchical under the Tudors and Stuarts, aristocratic under the Hanoverians. She is now popular. Never in any of the phases through which she has passed has she wholly lost her intellectual supremacy. Her power to mould the future of England, possibly to compose the jarring strife of Christendom, will depend on her ability to command the intellectual allegiance, as well as to inspire the affectionate zeal, of the nation.

INDEX